UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/49/357
6 September 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Forty-ninth session
Item 22 of the provisional agenda*

ASSISTANCE IN MINE CLEARANCE

Report of the Secretary-General

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its forty-eighth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 48/7 of 19 October 1993, entitled "Assistance in mine clearance" by consensus. In the resolution the Assembly deplored the adverse consequences that can be caused by the failure to remove mines and other unexploded devices remaining in place after armed conflicts, and considered it a matter of urgency to correct the situation; stressed the importance of coordination by the United Nations of activities, including those by regional organizations, related to mine clearance, in particular those activities relating to information and training with a view to improving the effectiveness of operations in the field; invited all relevant programmes and bodies, multilateral or national, to include, in a coordinated manner, activities related to mine clearance in their humanitarian, social and economic assistance activities; requested the Secretary-General to submit to it a comprehensive report on the problems caused by the increasing presence of mines and other unexploded devices resulting from armed conflicts and on the manner in which the United Nations contribution to the solution of problems of mine clearance could be strengthened, and to include in his report consideration of the financial aspects of activities related to mine clearance and, in that context, of the advisability of establishing a voluntary trust fund to finance, in particular, information and training programmes relating to mine clearance and to facilitate the launching of mine-clearance operations; and urged all Member States to extend full assistance and cooperation to the Secretary-General in that respect and to provide him with any information that could be useful in drawing up the report.

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* A/49/150.

2. On 23 March 1994, the Secretary-General addressed a note verbale to all Member States seeking information on the elements called for under resolution 48/7. The responses of Member States are contained in an addendum to the present report. This report has been prepared taking into account the information provided by Member States, as well as ongoing consultations with United Nations agencies, intergovernmental bodies and non-governmental organization partners, as well as information and advice provided by United Nations humanitarian and de-mining programme staff in the field. The report will cover the nature and magnitude of the problem facing the international community, the efforts made and experiences encountered in providing assistance in de-mining and recommendations for strengthening the manner in which the United Nations can contribute to the solution of the problem.

II. THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

3. Of all of the forms of debris left in the aftermath of conflict, land-mines are the most widespread and pernicious. It is estimated that there are more than 110 million land-mines spread in 64 countries around the world, and that between 2 and 5 million more are being laid each year. According to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), more than 800 people per month are killed by land-mines, most of them innocent civilians, and thousands more are maimed. Land-mines may be one of the most widespread, lethal and long-lasting forms of pollution we have yet encountered, and we are currently losing the battle to protect innocent civilians from their effects. In that context, it would not appear to be relevant whether responsibility lies with those who produce land-mines or with those who use them in a manner inconsistent with international humanitarian law.

4. Essentially, two categories of land-mine are commonly in use, anti-personnel and anti-tank. Anti-personnel (AP) land-mines are small, inexpensive munitions designed to be detonated either by a person stepping on the mine or by a person touching a trip-wire connected to the mine. These land-mines are easily obtainable, often for less than $2 per mine. Modern AP land-mines are generally manufactured almost entirely of plastic and are often no larger than 6 centimetres across, making them extremely difficult to detect. They are designed to detonate when subject to 7 kilogrammes or more of continuous pressure. Their object is to maim rather than kill. The logic behind this is that a wounded soldier eliminates that soldier from the battle, as well as the additional soldiers required to assist him, whereas if the mine were to simply kill the soldier, only he would be eliminated from the battle. Those who survive wounds from AP mines often lose at least one limb and often suffer additional muscular damage, damage to internal organs, blindness and the loss of testes.

5. Anti-tank (AT) mines are large mines designed to be triggered by vehicles and generally require more than 100 kilogrammes of pressure to detonate. AT mines often contain more than 6 kilogrammes of explosive and are capable of destroying tanks and other armoured vehicles, as well as relief trucks, tractors, passenger vehicles and construction equipment. AT mines are generally laid in roads and along railways, disrupting normal transport and thus preventing activities such as the delivery of relief supplies. They are more

expensive than AP mines and so are generally found in much smaller numbers. It is claimed that such mines are less directly dangerous to civilians than AP mines because they are not usually detonated by pedestrians. However, they are often modified by combatants in the field in order to enable them to be detonated with only 7 kilogrammes of pressure. Such modified AT mines literally blow their victims apart.

6. What separates land-mines from other forms of debris of war - making them more damaging than other types of munitions - is the collateral effect of their continued lethal nature upon the societies in infested States. Although they are used as military weapons during the course of conflict, once conflict has ceased, they have humanitarian effects vastly out of proportion to their numbers. Unlike other types of weapons, uncleared land-mines constitute a unique and malignant threat to whole societies. Engineered to be deadly for decades, land-mines continue to remain lethal long after the conflict has ceased. Designed to kill and injure, to impede movement and to sow seeds of uncertainty and chaos during time of war, land-mines continue to fulfil their destructive mission until they are found and destroyed. They do not differentiate between soldiers and civilians, between tanks or farmers' tractors. One former Cambodian general has described land-mines as silent sentries that never miss and never sleep. They also never make peace. They are perpetually at war, killing and maiming in spite of peace treaties and cease-fire agreements.

7. In addition to their longevity, land-mines are particularly devastating because they are essentially invisible. Most of the time, land-mines are buried underground in such a manner that they are hidden from detection. Land-mines are commonly hidden in farmers' fields, on roads and paths, along power lines and in power plants, under shade trees and in houses and buildings. Sometimes they are triggered by trip-wires, thin wires that may stretch for 20 metres and are almost invisible to the eye. Many mines triggered by trip-wires spring into the air, about waist high, before exploding and sending a lethal spray of shrapnel around a circle more than 60 metres in diameter. Such bounding mines, in the worst circumstances, can devastate a whole party of civilians or, for example, a de-mining team. Other mines are triggered by pressure and blow up once they are stepped on or driven over. Such characteristics mean that, in a mined area, one can never be sure that any step, any attempt to enter a building or to cultivate a field, any activity at all, may not result in death or maiming.

8. Although mapping of minefields is required by international law, it is rarely accurate, if it is done at all. The mapping of mines distributed by aircraft, rockets or guns is almost impossible. Even when there is knowledge of the original locations, climatic conditions (such as floods or snow drifts) can cause mines to move. It is not uncommon for minefields to be overlaid with more mines, so that, even if maps had been kept of the original locations, they are no longer accurate. Over time, the number of persons aware of the locations of mines may decrease and any informal records kept may be lost or destroyed.

9. Ignoring the tremendous humanitarian consequences of land-mines, some still cling to the belief that the problem is simply a military one. However, the impact of uncleared land-mines goes far beyond the limits of battlefields and

former battlefields, affecting all facets of national life. Some say that because land-mines are weapons of war and were laid in time of military conflict, it is a military responsibility to remove them. Unfortunately, the parties to the conflict are often unable or unwilling to remove land-mines once the conflict has ceased. In conventional warfare, land-mines are laid to channel enemy forces into particular avenues of approach, to defend key terrain and to inhibit enemy movement. As a consequence, opposition forces view minefields as obstacles to be breached or bypassed. Military countermine technology has thus been focused almost exclusively on clearing narrow avenues through minefields so that forces can pass through the obstacle rapidly under battlefield conditions, often by pushing the land-mines to one side. Unfortunately, however, blowing a 10-metre lane in a farmer's field or destroying a highway with a mine plough mounted on a tank does nothing to help the civilian population and much to hurt it. In addition, military countermine techniques are intended for dealing with land-mines laid in accordance with established practices and are less effective when faced with randomly laid mines, as is common in internal conflicts. While countermine techniques are effective for the military requirement of breaching the minefield, they are of little or no use to civilians faced with the problem of mine clearance after the end of hostilities. For civilian purposes, all land-mines must be removed from a village or an agricultural field before it can return to normalcy or productive use. At present, this type of mine clearance is a long-term, low-technology process that, while it has military overtones, can in the long run only be addressed as a humanitarian/development issue.

10. While mine technology has progressed rapidly in the years since the end of the Second World War, mine-detection and clearance technology has not. The majority of mine-detection and clearance equipment in use today is derived from 1940s technology and is usually incapable of producing the level of clearance (99 per cent or more) needed for human habitation after clearance. Even current electromagnetic mine detectors still rely on the small amounts of residual metal in mines for their detection. Unfortunately, the areas in which mines are found are generally littered with small pieces of shrapnel and other metal objects, each of which triggers electromagnetic mine detectors, and each of which has to be carefully located and uncovered as though it were a live mine. In Cambodia, an average of 129 pieces of harmless metal are found and uncovered for every mine found and uncovered, greatly slowing the de-mining process. The problem of detecting non-metallic mines has not yet been solved. Some research and development is reportedly taking place on mechanical equipment for mine clearance. Additional research is being devoted to developing different mine-detection systems and methodologies; some existing technologies could also be further developed for that purpose. In most instances, the level and volume of research is too low and lacking in practicality and coordination.

11. In addition to the current rudimentary technology and the general lack of minefield maps, obstacles to successful mine clearance include the fact that mines may continue to be laid even when organized removal efforts are under way, or that access to known minefields may continue to be restricted and information withheld by the parties concerned. Conflicting parties often have a sense of "attachment" to their mines, feeling that they offer them protection, and are often reluctant to agree to their clearance. Even when non-cooperation is not an issue, the multitude of types of mines, as well as vast variations in terrain

and climate, complicate questions regarding appropriate methodology and equipment for removal.

12. In addition to uncleared land-mines, post-conflict societies often have to contend with other types of unexploded ordnance (UXO). Most common nowadays are "bombies", sometimes also called "bomblets", the small explosive devices contained in cluster munitions. UXO of that type constitute a particular hazard in parts of South-East Asia and in the Middle East. Over time, such munitions become covered by undergrowth and eroded soil and, to all intents and purposes, function like land-mines. However, while UXO may pose problems and risks similar to those created by land-mines, UXO is often readily visible and the metal casings provide easy detectability. In addition, UXO tends to be less of a direct hazard to civilians because, as most of these munitions are designed to detonate upon reaching a certain height above the ground or upon impact, those which fail to do so are generally defective. Still, any UXO is potentially dangerous because it is a combination of explosives and a detonating mechanism, the latter, by definition, being defective. This means that UXO could go off at the slightest touch, or could lie safely inert for decades. Unfortunately, UXO is most likely to explode if mishandled or played with by children. Consequently, all UXO has to be treated as though it could go off immediately and must be disposed of safely.

A. Effects on society

13. The profound effect land-mines have on all facets of society in infested States is intensified by the fact that they are hidden and difficult to detect. There is an element of uncertainty that is uniquely characteristic of land-mines, an element that makes them particularly frightening and disruptive. Most minefields are indistinguishable from surrounding countryside. Generally, the first evidence the local population has of the existence of a minefield is the death or injury of one of their family or friends. From that evidence it is impossible to know the extent of the minefield or how many mines have been laid. Given the severity of the risk, local civilians are forced to avoid any area in which they know a mine has exploded. This means that the explosion of only one mine in a field or rice paddy is often enough to render that land unusable. In food deficit areas where population pressures force local inhabitants to work or to seek food in mined areas, the borders of minefields are located and marked by deaths and injuries.

14. In countries where mines have been laid in farmers' fields, arable land becomes unusable. As more agricultural land is taken out of production, regions that were once self-sufficient are forced to depend upon outside shipments of food for sustenance. In Angola, it is estimated that land-mines have reduced food production in the areas around Melanje, and other besieged cities, by more than 25 per cent. In Mozambique, the effects of drought have been multiplied by the mining of arable land and the road system; in Sofala and Zambézia provinces, the delivery of food relief shipments to populations unable to farm their mined fields has been impeded and sometimes prevented by the mining of the road system. In other countries, the mining of irrigation systems and water-delivery plants makes it almost impossible to farm even those fields which are not mine-infested. Nomadic peoples tend to suffer the highest casualty and death

rates from land-mines as they move from mined area to mined area in order to find pasturage for flocks. In addition, the livestock and game upon which they depend for sustenance are often killed by land-mines, making what is often a precarious existence even more difficult.

15. The effects of uncleared land-mines are easily identifiable, although difficult to quantify. No statistics relating to the land-mine problem are systematically kept, although rough predictions of the impact on gross national product exist informally. One of the issues relating to statistical quantification is the difficulty in separating the impact of the presence of uncleared land-mines from the impact of the conflict itself when doing comparisons with pre-conflict figures. Realizing the importance of quantifying the problem, the non-governmental organization Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation is undertaking an in-depth study of the socio-economic impact of land-mines in four land-mine-infested societies.

16. It is common in many conflicts for key elements of the national infrastructure to be mined by both sides to the conflict. Roads, power lines, electric plants, irrigation systems, water plants, dams and industrial plants are often mined during civil conflicts. In the aftermath of those conflicts, it is often impossible to approach such facilities to repair them or to conduct needed maintenance. As a consequence, the delivery of electricity and water becomes more sporadic and often ceases in heavily mined areas. Irrigation systems become unusable, with consequent effects on agricultural production. Transportation of goods and services is halted on mined roads and the roads themselves begin to deteriorate. Local businesses, unable to obtain supplies or ship products, cease operation. Unemployment in those areas increases and the prices for scarce goods tend to enter an inflationary spiral, increasing the cycle of misery. In those areas dependent upon outside aid for sustenance, the mining of roads can mean a sentence to death by starvation. In addition, populations unable to return to mined villages, or unable to find traditional employment, congregate in urban areas, straining already overburdened social welfare systems.

17. Mine casualties themselves place a significant burden upon war-ravaged societies. Generally, those societies with the most severe land-mine problems, societies recovering from the aftermath of war, are those least able to deal with the consequences of land-mine infestation. The medical infrastructure in such countries is often rudimentary and trained medical personnel and facilities are scarce. The wounds caused by land-mines are the type with which such overburdened medical systems are least equipped to cope. Mine wounds require skilled surgery, large amounts of blood, antibiotics and other drugs. Recovery time for the horrendous wounds caused by AP mines is generally much longer than for other types of shock/trauma wounds. In addition, prosthetic devices and intense physical therapy are required to allow mine victims to return to some semblance of a normal life. Such care is generally beyond the capabilities of the medical infrastructure in many mine-infested countries. They have the resources neither in trained personnel, nor in facilities, equipment and drugs. Large numbers of mine victims drain these fragile medical infrastructures of scarce resources, often causing what is essentially a complete collapse in heavily mined regions. As a consequence many mine victims who would survive were proper medical help available, die in the field an go unreported.

18. In addition to the social costs, land-mines impose an enormous personal cost on those who survive a mine blast. In almost all cases, victims of land-mines suffer the loss of one or more limbs. In Cambodia, one out of every 234 people is an amputee, a rate more than one hundred times higher than in Europe or the United States. In Angola alone there are 20,000 amputees due to land-mines. In most agrarian societies, the loss of a limb makes it impossible for a person to carry out normal economic activities. They cannot help in the fields, or carry heavy loads or work in other ways to support their families. Psychologically, these victims come to think of themselves as burdens upon their families and communities. They often turn to begging to survive. In order to rehabilitate these land-mine victims and help them to become productive members of their societies once again, appropriate prosthetic devices and extensive physical therapy is needed. Unfortunately, the skills and training necessary to manufacture and fit prosthetic devices, and to conduct physical therapy training, are scarce or do not exist in some countries with serious land-mine problems. Recognizing this, a number of organizations have been very active in providing prosthetic devices, in creating indigenous production capacities and in training local personnel to fit the devices properly and to conduct the necessary physical therapy to enable mine victims to utilize the devices fully. Organizations such as Handicap International, ICRC, the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation, the Somali Lifeline project, the Cambodia Trust and others have been extremely active in that area in countries such as Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, Iraq, Mozambique and Somalia. However, the cost of providing these devices, training and production capacities is very high.

B. The costs to the international community

19. Land-mines exact an enormous toll not only on affected States, but on the international community as a whole. The same land-mine that may bring a vendor $3 in revenue costs the international community between $300 and $1,000 to clear. At a minimum, therefore, the 110 million land-mines currently buried worldwide will cost approximately $33 billion for clearance alone. Last year, the international community allocated approximately $70 million to clear roughly 100,000 land-mines. During the same period, however, roughly 2 million more land-mines were laid, leaving the international community with an annual "de-mining deficit" of some 1.9 million mines last year, and adding another $1.4 billion, at the same annual cost of clearance, to the aggregate cost of clearing the world's land-mines.

20. These costs do not take into account costs associated with programmes to treat victims of mine accidents. It is estimated that each mine victim who survives will incur lifetime costs associated with surgery and prosthetic care of up to $3,000, using locally trained personnel. It is estimated that there are currently approximately 250,000 amputee mine victims requiring prosthetics care and that number is expected to increase by about 800 persons every month. Surgery and lifetime support programmes for the current number of victims could therefore cost the international community a further $750 million.

21. If, on the other hand, the land-mines are left uncleared, they will cost the international community untold millions of dollars in additional humanitarian aid. The additional aid, in its own right, would be costly, but

those costs will be compounded because the presence of land-mines will prevent countries from re-establishing themselves economically. The uncleared land-mines will raise the cost of food relief as they render delivery routes unusable and arable land untillable; they will raise the costs for continued support of refugees as they cause delays in repatriation; they will raise health sector costs as further medical and prosthetics care is required for mine-accident victims; they will raise social welfare costs as societies seek to support growing segments of the population handicapped by mine accidents; and they will raise development costs as they hinder the rehabilitation of national infrastructure. Last year, the United Nations sought a total of $2.5 billion in humanitarian aid for 16 countries, of which 13 have serious mine problems.

III. ADVOCACY ISSUES

22. De-mining alone is not the solution to the global problem of uncleared land-mines. The 2 million new land-mines currently being laid each year, at present rates of clearance, will add roughly two decades to the time it will take to rid the world of this plague. Even with a significant increase in de-mining efforts worldwide and foreseeable advances in technology, it will be impossible to solve the global land-mine problem unless their proliferation is halted. The best and most effective way to achieve this is to ban completely the production, use and transfer of all land-mines. Member States are invited to consider establishing such a ban as a matter of urgency. Pending an international agreement on such a ban, immediate steps must be taken to slow the proliferation of land-mines and to protect civilians from their effects.

23. There is a strong view held in the humanitarian community that action must be taken to limit the proliferation of the land-mine problem. The international community has also recognized that need, and took action at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly to that end. In particular, the Assembly adopted resolution 48/75 K of 16 December 1993 calling for a moratorium on the transfer of excessively injurious AP land-mines. One of the unique characteristics of the land-mine problem is that very few of the States in which conflict has resulted in land-mine contamination produce land-mines themselves. More than 85 per cent of all uncleared land-mines in those States were and are purchased or transferred from some of the roughly 40 mine-producing States. Thus, an effective moratorium on the transfer of land-mines by those mine-producing States could, once current stockpiles are depleted, cut the rate of land-mine proliferation by 85 per cent. It is therefore urgent that Member States establish and adhere to a moratorium on the transfer of AP land-mines deemed excessively injurious to civilians. A report on the implementation of resolution 48/75 K is to be issued as document A/49/275.

24. The General Assembly also created, in its resolution 48/79, the Group of Governmental Experts to prepare the review conference for the 1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (the Inhumane Weapons Convention). 1/ Protocol II to the Convention 2/ regulates the use of land-mines and outlines what types of land-mines and booby traps may be legally employed, and how. One of the main weaknesses of Protocol II as currently drafted is that it applies only to conflict between States. However,

most of the 65 million land-mines laid in the last 20 years were laid in the course of internal conflicts. It is for the Group of Experts to examine this and other issues relating to restrictions on the use of land-mines, in order to make the Protocol into an effective instrument for controlling the spread and use of land-mines. Once this is achieved, it is to be hoped that there would be broad-based ratification of it by Member States and respect of its provisions by parties to internal conflicts.

25. Although it is critical that an effective moratorium on the transfer of AP land-mines is established and that the 1980 Inhumane Weapons Convention is revised, something more is needed. Given the fact that the global problem of uncleared land-mines is largely a humanitarian problem, Member States must begin to approach the question of controlling land-mines from a humanitarian point of view. In that context, the General Assembly may wish urgently to consider establishing a broad-based humanitarian regime to protect civilian populations from land-mines. Such a regime would complement the ongoing efforts to establish a moratorium on trade in land-mines and stricter legal prohibitions on the use of land-mines. To provide effective protection to civilians, such a regime should ban the production, transfer and use of all land-mines that are not easily detectable and that do not self-destruct after a short period. It should mandate the destruction of all stockpiles of land-mines not meeting that criterion. This regime should also ban the use of land-mines against civilian targets or in areas with large civilian populations. It should further place strict requirements for mapping and marking all minefields, and for registering those maps in a timely manner with the United Nations. Finally, it should establish the principle that those who lay land-mines must be responsible for their clearance. The scope of such a regime should be as broad as possible to counter effectively the threat posed by the proliferation of land-mines and their indiscriminate use during the course of internal conflict.

26. In addition, the United Nations has been playing a role as advocate for the development of more modern technologies for mine detection and mine clearance. De-mining is extremely slow, dangerous and expensive, largely because increases in de-mining technology have not kept pace with the increases in land-mine technology. United Nations de-mining experts have participated in a number of symposia and workshops aimed at fostering the development of modern de-mining technologies. In addition, the United Nations University (UNU) undertook a project to define more accurately the nature of the technology problem and to identify possible areas for advancement. The objective of de-mining technology research should be to enable a significant increase in the speed and accuracy with which land-mines, including the non-metallic variety, can be found and destroyed. The detection technology to create a multi-sensor mine detector already exists: only the engineering and software programming would be required. Further advances in stand-off detection and stand-off destruction methods would increase the speed and effectiveness as well. However, such technological solutions must be practical and sustainable at the local level. Systems carried by airplanes or helicopters are of little use in regions with no airports or refuelling facilities. Systems requiring large amounts of electricity will be of little use in regions with no electricity.

IV. CURRENT EFFORTS TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM

27. Faced with this grim arithmetic, it is welcomed that the General Assembly has decided to undertake a comprehensive examination of the land-mine problem. The international community has been approaching the problem on two levels: firstly, with regard to the clearance of land-mines already laid and, secondly, with respect to restricting the use and availability of new land-mines. In connection with clearance, the United Nations has perhaps had the most experience with providing assistance for dealing with the problem as a humanitarian issue. Regional organizations have also been addressing the question of mine clearance, and the Organization of American States (OAS), in particular, has undertaken programmes of assistance in that regard. Some Governments are also providing assistance in mine clearance on a bilateral basis, sometimes in conjunction with United Nations or other programmes. A number of international humanitarian de-mining non-governmental organizations have been established in recent years, working sometimes with funding from United Nations sources and sometimes with direct funding from donors.

A. Regional organizations

28. According to the reply of OAS to the Secretary-General's request for information, in 1992, upon the representation of the Foreign Ministers of Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, OAS created a Central American Mine-Clearance Assistance Programme to provide technical and financial assistance to States seeking to clear Central American soil of land-mines and explosive devices. An estimated 160,000 land-mines were present in Central America, including an estimated 129,000 in Nicaragua, 20,000 in El Salvador, 4,000 in Costa Rica, 4,000 in Honduras and 3,000 in Guatemala. Many of those land-mines were laid around key infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, dams, power lines and water stations, to protect them from sabotage. Unfortunately, the location of the land-mines in those minefields was often changed by hostile forces or by the action of water and other natural elements. The result was often that the installations and equipment that had previously been protected by land-mines were in fact isolated by them. Maintenance and repair of those bridges and other types of infrastructure was impossible.

29. With the financial assistance of various donor States and the Partnership for Democracy and Development, and the military assistance and expertise of the Inter-American Defense Board, OAS began a programme to assist countries in removing land-mines. Emphasis was placed upon providing technical expertise, training and equipment to the armed forces of the various States. Phase one of the programme began in Nicaragua in early 1993. Expert instructors from eight Latin American Governments began training five platoons of Nicaraguan Army de-miners. By July 1993, all five platoons had been trained, equipped and deployed. Between June 1993 and February 1994, the platoons destroyed more than 6,500 land-mines and cleared roughly 20 per cent of the areas targeted by the Government of Nicaragua. Unfortunately, difficulties in continuing the financing of the programme after OAS assistance ended have led Nicaragua to stop the programme until additional funds can be found. In addition to the assistance provided in Nicaragua, OAS is prepared to provide similar assistance to Honduras and Costa Rica, once the necessary $3.2 million in funding becomes

available. OAS, in conjunction with the Government of Brazil, also provided technical de-mining assistance and equipment to the Government of Suriname to enable it to ascertain that land-mines laid during the civil war in that country had been cleared.

B. United Nations

Effects on United Nations programmes and missions

30. The land-mine problem directly affects all facets of the United Nations humanitarian, peace-keeping and post-conflict peace-building activities, and also has an effect upon its peacemaking activities. The presence of mines hinders the deployment and operational activities of humanitarian and peace-keeping missions, and complicates the achievement of operational objectives with respect to any activity that requires population movement, such as repatriation, assembly of forces, demobilization and the conduct of elections. However, although there are mine problems in some countries where the United Nations has peace-keeping missions, there are not peace-keeping missions in all countries where the United Nations has to address the land-mine issue. Of the more than 60 land-mine-infested countries, the United Nations has peace-keeping operations in 7; United Nations humanitarian personnel are currently operating in about 20.

31. The need for humanitarian assistance is generally acute in societies struggling with conflict. The presence of uncleared land-mines poses a serious challenge to date to those humanitarian assistance efforts and often prevents the achievement of key humanitarian objectives. The problem cuts across the complete spectrum of United Nations humanitarian relief and rehabilitation efforts, from the delivery of relief supplies, to the repatriation of refugees, from the provision of assistance to children and women, to efforts aimed at rehabilitating and improving basic infrastructures. While United Nations humanitarian agencies must deal with the problem as it pertains to the implementation of their particular mandates, the problem is of such consequence that it must be addressed in a comprehensive, coordinated and systematic way.

32. Because the presence of uncleared land-mines adds significantly to the need for humanitarian assistance and because their presence impedes the effective delivery of that assistance, it is essential that the problem be considered and dealt with in the humanitarian framework. Rectification of a serious land-mine problem in a particular country may take decades. It is humanitarian personnel who must address the problem head-on at the earliest stages, and it is humanitarian and development personnel who must together ensure that long-term solutions to the mine problem are in place. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs has therefore been named by the Secretary-General to be the focal point within the United Nations for all de-mining and land-mine related issues. It serves to coordinate the United Nations response to land-mine problems, as well as to provide support, assistance and advice to other United Nations agencies.

33. The World Food Programme (WFP) is one of the United Nations agencies whose work is regularly hindered by uncleared land-mines. In Afghanistan, Angola, northern Iraq, Mozambique, Somalia and the Sudan, the United Nations has been

prevented from delivering food shipments over land in certain areas because the roads have been extensively mined. Faced with this problem, WFP has been forced to seek alternatives to overland distribution in some countries, sometimes resorting to flying relief supplies into regional distribution centres because the mining of the road system prevented the actual delivery of supplies to afflicted towns and villages. WFP has depended upon the assistance of trained national de-mining teams in countries where the United Nations has organized mine-action programmes. In other countries, it has had to hire de-mining contractors and provide de-mining equipment to open access routes.

34. The daily operations of the personnel of the Office of the United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the field have also been adversely affected by uncleared land-mines. In most mine-infested countries, the voluntary repatriation of refugees is slowed or halted by the presence of uncleared land-mines in the towns and villages to which the refugees are to return. The presence of land-mines causes involuntary displacement of civilians and prevents refugees from seeking asylum in mine-infested areas. The delays in repatriation, reintegration and resettlement caused by uncleared land-mines may have political consequences and certainly present ongoing resource needs to support the continued presence in countries of asylum. United Nations-sponsored de-mining programmes in Afghanistan and Cambodia helped provide to refugees enough confidence to repatriate in significant numbers. Recognizing the threat to returning refugees posed by uncleared land-mines, UNHCR routinely conducts special mine-awareness training courses in refugee camps to educate repatriating populations in how to avoid being injured by land-mines. Its mine-awareness programmes have been an integral part of the comprehensive United Nations mine-action programmes in Afghanistan, Cambodia and Mozambique. UNHCR has also been involved in mine survey and marking activities to reduce the risks posed to affected populations. It has been a vocal advocate for a ban on the production, use and sale of AP land-mines.

35. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has also been in the forefront of mine-awareness education and advocacy. Land-mines are particularly injurious to children and so constitute a serious challenge for UNICEF. The dangers to children posed by uncleared land-mines was recognized by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/157 of 20 December 1993 relating to the impact of armed conflicts on children. Many AP land-mines that are scattered from the air are coloured in bright colours, which are particularly attractive to children. Spotting these brightly coloured objects, many children innocently pick them up to play with them. A large percentage of them are then grievously injured when the mines explode. Children are also injured by AP mines as they engage in normal play. Often their playful wanderings take them into minefields whose existence was unknown to the local inhabitants. As a consequence, in many heavily mined areas, children are forbidden to play out of doors. Sometimes, the presence of the land-mines has become so ingrained in the local culture that, as a hobby, children try to collect different kinds. Children are also specially at risk in many societies because they are responsible for tending livestock. As their herds and flocks move about the countryside, the children follow, often being led unknowingly into mined areas. Children injured in such areas often perish before aid can arrive and their deaths go unreported. Land-mines introduce children to the threat of injury and violent death at an early age and they rob them of childhood play. UNICEF, recognizing the seriousness of

the threat posed to children by uncleared land-mines, has been conducting mine-awareness education campaigns in schoolrooms in a number of countries. The UNICEF mine-awareness campaign in El Salvador was particularly effective. UNICEF has also been a strong advocate of efforts to ban use and production of AP land-mines, with particular reference to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (resolution 47/5, annex).

36. The World Health Organization (WHO), in the frame of restructuring its mandate in the field of humanitarian activities, is taking steps better to assess public health consequences of various types of violence, including the consequences of land-mines. In the WHO American region, a regional plan of action on health and violence has been established, including activities relating to the problem of land-mines. WHO is also working with UNHCR to develop rehabilitation services in refugee settings, the objective of which is, in addition to providing services, to assess the prevalence of all types of disabilities resulting from war, including land-mines. In addition to amputation of limbs, other impediments, particularly visual and mental, are caused by land-mines, for which few organizations have experience in rehabilitation.

37. The United Nations has been forced to focus on the problem of uncleared land-mines in the context of its peace-keeping missions. In recent years, United Nations forces have deployed in a number of countries with serious land-mine problems. Land-mines are now the second cause of casualties among United Nations peace-keepers due to hostile action after direct fire. As for humanitarian personnel, the presence of land-mines inhibits the movement of peace-keeping forces and raises serious problems in the deployment phase of peace-keeping operations. In addition, land-mines inhibit the achievement of peace-keeping and peace-building objectives such as assembly of forces, demobilization and the conduct of elections. In missions such as the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), mine clearance has been carried out by United Nations forces to provide a secure environment for peace-keeping operations and to ensure freedom of movement. Within the context of peace-keeping missions, therefore, the United Nations has approached the mine problem on two levels: firstly, as a purely military issue affecting the deployment of military personnel and, secondly, as an integrated peace-keeping/humanitarian endeavour affecting the achievement of the overall objectives of the United Nations in the country in question.

38. At the Headquarters level, the Department of Peace-keeping Operations has retained two de-mining advisers to provide technical support and advice to United Nations peace-keeping personnel in the field. They also serve as technical advisers to the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in the preparation of United Nations integrated and humanitarian mine-action programmes. At the field level, the Department of Peace-keeping Operations has been involved in activities ranging from limited mine clearance in connection with force deployments to the provision of de-mining instructors and resources for training in integrated peace-keeping/humanitarian operations. In general, however, recognizing that general military forces are not trained to conduct de-mining and that Member States are reluctant to commit special units to conduct

dangerous mine clearance, United Nations peace-keeping operations have relied upon trained humanitarian de-mining teams and contractors to do clearance.

C. Current United Nations country activities

39. The fundamental principle underlying all United Nations involvement in the issue is that the primary responsibility for taking action against the presence of mines lies with the concerned State. This derives from the principle that good governance involves ensuring the safety of the citizenry. Thus, as there is often a complete lack of indigenous capacity (technical and financial) to de-mine, the approach for United Nations assistance has generally been one of capacity-building. As with all humanitarian activities, mine-action activities are only undertaken on the basis of consent. Another prerequisite for United Nations involvement in mine-action programmes is the existence of adequate security conditions. The fact that the United Nations provides assistance does not entail any assumption of responsibiiity for the presence of land-mines in country.

40. The United Nations has been endeavouring to ensure a timely and effective response, as well as appropriate arrangements to enable continuity of national mine-clearance efforts as normalization of conditions in a country progresses. United Nations programmes fall into three categories: mine assistance as part of a solely humanitarian operation, such as in Afghanistan and Iraq; mine assistance carried out in collaboration with United Nations peace-keeping missions, such as in Mozambique and Somalia; and mine assistance in the post-conflict peace-building environment, carried out in conjunction with economic and social development efforts, such as in Cambodia.

41. As a first step to United Nations involvement in a mined area, a quick assessment must be made, in order broadly to identify mined areas, the types of mines in use, the technical nature of the problem, and the existence of local capacities. The de-mining advisors in the Department of Peace-keeping Operations have generally undertaken that function on behalf of the United Nations system. Based on their findings, assessments of requirements for United Nations assistance can be made, and mine-awareness education and mine-action plans can be formulated. Mine-clearance criteria and priorities are considered in that context, to ensure that basic needs can be met with the available capacity. These would include, for example, operational needs of United Nations missions, including any needs to open and/or establish vital infrastructure as quickly as possible, needs presented in the context of refugee repatriation and resettlement, or the need to re-establish basic revenue-earning capabilities of the country.

42. The objective of United Nations mine-action programmes is to assist in the creation of national mine-clearance capacities, including in programme supervision and management, for dealing with the problem on a long-term basis. Under such programmes, civilian mine clearers are recruited locally and trained for the task in their own country, initially under the supervision and guidance of United Nations instructors and supervisors or, if necessary, contracted expatriate supervisors and instructors. This approach has the advantages of being cost-effective and local participation eases communication and increases

trust and confidence in the programme. Expatriate personnel are gradually replaced as local personnel are trained to fill the role and overall responsibility and control of the programme is transferred progressively to the country concerned.

43. The nature of the land-mine problem demands complete transparency of information in order to obviate unnecessary accidents. In addition to close collaboration with local authorities and close cooperation among members of the United Nations family, all United Nations mine-clearance efforts in the country should be coordinated with non-United Nations-funded efforts, including those of non-governmental organizations and commercial companies conducting mine-related activities in the area. Such information-sharing and cooperation greatly enhances the safety of all concerned and helps avoid wasteful duplication. The United Nations has been endeavouring to establish mine databases in the field, with mapping capacities, for compilation and analysis of information gathered through surveys and other means, in order to facilitate the coordination and security of operations in mine-affected countries. Such databases are generally established as part of any mine-action programmes in conjunction with the Government, or as part of the humanitarian coordination mechanism in-country.

44. The United Nations has been engaged in the implementation of mine-action activities and programmes in 12 countries. Those programmes differ in structure, size and in their arrangements for funding and implementation. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs, in its role as focal point for land-mine related issues, regularly convenes meetings for the development and coordination of mine-action programmes in particular countries, working closely with interested agencies and United Nations departments, including the Department of Administration and Management, the Office of Legal Affairs and the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, to ensure an appropriate, comprehensive and coordinated United Nations response. Coordination of mine action and effective response in mine-affected countries is also a matter considered by the Inter-agency Standing Committee on a regular basis.

Afghanistan

45. An estimated 10 million mines are scattered over an area of 350 square kilometres in Afghanistan. Land-mine activities commenced in 1988 as part of Operation Salam. In January 1993, responsibility for the programme was assumed by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan, which continues to provide management and oversight of technical and financial aspects. The programme is implemented by six Afghan non-governmental organizations and employs some 2,500 trained Afghan de-miners. Mine-detecting dogs have recently been incorporated into the programme. The non-governmental organization Halo Trust is also involved in mine-clearance operations under the programme. De-mining is undertaken on the basis of priorities established on humanitarian grounds, bearing in mind, in particular, the needs of returning refugees. A comprehensive national survey of the land-mines was published in 1993. Programme costs run at about $20 million per year, for which funds are sought through consolidated appeals.

Angola

46. The widespread laying of land-mines intensified dramatically since hostilities resumed in October 1992. It is estimated that 9 to 15 million mines have now been laid throughout the country. The Central Mine-Action Office in Angola was established in March 1994 as part of the Unit for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Angola, with funds raised through a consolidated appeal. The appeal also sought funds to enable WFP to undertake emergency mine clearance and rehabilitation of roads necessary to permit access of humanitarian supplies. Prior to agreement on a peace accord between the conflicting Angolan parties, the Central Mine-Action Office has been limited to preparatory activities, including general information gathering and coordination of mine-awareness education programmes, establishing a central database of mine information, preparing for a nation-wide general mine survey and laying the foundations for assistance in other areas of mine action at the appropriate time. It is intended that the Office will become the core of the United Nations mine-assistance programme, in cooperation with any United Nations peace-keeping forces in Angola, once a peace accord is reached. UNICEF and UNHCR are planning to conduct mine-awareness education in Angola, in coordination with the Office. The non-governmental organization Cap Anamur has been involved in mine clearance in Cunene province in Angola for some time; a number of other non-governmental organizations are interested in becoming involved in mine clearance in Angola and some have already begun to establish presences there.

Cambodia

47. An estimated 8 to 10 million mines remain scattered over an area of 3,200 square kilometres. The United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) was given the mandate of creating a national capacity to deal with the problem and assisted with the establishment of the Cambodian Mine-Action Centre in cooperation with the Supreme National Council. With the election of a new Government and the withdrawal of UNTAC in late 1993, the Centre became a fully Cambodian entity providing mine awareness, mine marking, mine clearance and mine-clearance training programmes. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs worked closely with UNTAC, the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to ensure that the Centre received the additional assistance it required in order to become fully self-sufficient. Despite the goodwill demonstrated on all sides, the transfer of responsibility for providing assistance from UNTAC to UNDP was cumbersome and time-consuming. UNDP currently provides up to 30 technical advisers and $20 million, raised through voluntary contributions, under a two-year programme of assistance to the Centre that is scheduled to end in 1995. The Centre employs some 1,500 trained Cambodian de-miners. The non-governmental organizations Norwegian People's Aid, Handicap International, Halo Trust and Mine Advisory Group have been involved in mine-clearance activities in cooperation with the Centre, which has also recently begun to receive direct bilateral assistance. UNHCR was closely associated with the de-mining efforts during the UNTAC period in conjunction with the return of Cambodian refugees. In addition, UNICEF has conducted mine-awareness education as part of a social mobilization programme and in 1993 roughly 200 prosthetic devices were fitted by non-governmental organizations with UNICEF support.

El Salvador

48. A programme to lift some 20,000 "home-made" mines left after the war in El Salvador was undertaken by the Government of El Salvador, with the active collaboration of the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional, and the close cooperation of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) and UNICEF. UNICEF undertook a successful mine-awareness education programme in areas with populations at risk, as well as funding some mine clearance. The actual clearance, which was done mostly by a commercial company contracted by the Government, was declared completed in January 1994.

Georgia

49. There is a serious mine problem in areas of Abkhazia, which is hindering the return and reintegration of refugees and displaced persons. The peace-keeping force of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) has carried out mine clearance necessary for its own operational purposes, including the opening of some access routes that could also be useful in conjunction with returning populations. However, there remains a need to de-mine roads and resettlement areas (villages and agricultural areas). Voluntary contributions for that purpose have been sought through the consolidated appeal for the Caucasus. In addition, the Security Council has established a voluntary fund into which funds earmarked for de-mining can be deposited. A general assessment of the land-mine situation in the area has been carried out and a land-mine information capacity is being established in the humanitarian office. Mine-awareness education activities will be carried out by UNHCR. Alternatives for addressing the clearance needs are being examined.

Guatemala

50. Years of internal conflict have left parts of rural Guatemala with a land-mine problem. An estimated 2,000 to 4,000 land-mines are scattered in parts of Quiché and near the Atitlán and Tajumulco volcanoes. Refugees seeking to return to those areas face a serious risk of death or injury from the land-mines. At the request of the Government and with the cooperation of the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca, in April 1994 UNHCR started a risk-reduction and training programme in the Tercer Pueblo resettlement area. Mine-awareness education for the returning refugees is being undertaken by UNICEF, using materials based upon the mine-awareness education materials used in El Salvador.

Iraq

51. The northern governorates have been especially heavily mined in the last decades, with an estimated 10 million land-mines. Land-mine activities have been included in the United Nations Inter-agency Humanitarian Programme in Iraq. However, no comprehensive de-mining operation has been implemented in Iraq so far, owing to the absence of approval by the Government, which has been approached by the Office of the United Nations Coordinator for Humanitarian Activities to facilitate United Nations-sponsored mine-related activities. The non-governmental organization Mine Advisory Group is implementing

mine-awareness-education programmes, funded by UNICEF, and limited mine-clearance projects in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Liberia

52. A small problem comprising anti-vehicle mines (about 1,000) and UXO arose in Liberia, impeding access of relief supplies to areas of need. After an assessment of the problem, a modest programme entailing by the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) training of the forces of the Military Observer Group of the Economic Community of the West African States to clear the affected roads was developed. This was accepted in the Security Council and included in the UNOMIL budget. Unfortunately, however, although the parties have agreed to provide information on the location of the mines, the fundamental requirements of consent and security have not yet been met and further mine laying may have taken place. The mine situation will be reassessed when security conditions have stabilized.

Mozambique

53. There are estimated to be up to 2 million uncleared land-mines in Mozambique. De-mining activities were initiated in late 1992 and early 1993 by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and WFP. Mine-action assistance is currently being provided through the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ)/United Nations Office for Humanitarian Assistance Coordination with $18.5 million raised through assessed and voluntary contributions. Coordination and management is provided by the latter. In an effort to eliminate some of the transition difficulties encountered in Cambodia, an attempt was made to delegate, at an early stage, responsibilities for programme management, including capacity-building, to UNDP. This did not prove successful, however, in part because of the decentralized nature of channels of United Nations assistance and in part because of the special environment and needs of peace-keeping. Accordingly, the approach was urgently reconsidered and an accelerated plan was put into place for the last six months of ONUMOZ. A land-mine database has been established and a national mine survey was conducted by Halo Trust, a non-governmental organization contracted by UNDP. Some 2,000 kilometres of priority roads are also being cleared by commercial capacities contracted by UNDP (a further 2,000 kilometres are being cleared through direct bilateral assistance). UNICEF and UNHCR have been providing mine-awareness education to sections of the society at risk. The programme of the United Nations Office for Humanitarian Assistance Coordination is designed to train some 700 Mozambican de-miners by the expiry of the peace-keeping mandate, through a combination of classroom and on-the-job training carried out by the ONUMOZ Mine-Clearance Training Centre and by Norwegian People's Aid, a non-governmental organization contracted by ONUMOZ to do training and clearance, funding for which was shared by the Government of Norway. Training in de-mining programme management and administration is also part of the Office's plan, in order to enable a national mine-action entity to exercise responsibility for sustaining mine clearance after United Nations assistance has terminated.

Rwanda

54. Mine-clearance assistance plans were in place in conjunction with the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) prior to April 1994. At that time, it was estimated that there were some 30,000 uncleared land-mines, mostly in areas of the north-east to which refugees and displaced persons were expected to return. The resumption of civil strife halted all planning and preparation for the provision of United Nations de-mining assistance. In addition, it greatly enlarged the scope of the land-mine problem and it is reported that the armed forces of the previous Government laid land-mines in many areas, including towns and cities, as they retreated into Zaire. It is now believed that there are 50,000 to 60,000 uncleared land-mines in Rwanda. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Rwanda has reported that there are on average two civilian mine casualties a day in those areas. United Nations de-mining technical experts have visited Rwanda to re-assess the scope of the newly enlarged land-mine problem. Once the security situation stabilizes and de-mining can safely begin, the United Nations will work with all concerned to provide assistance to enable Rwanda to rid itself of land-mines.

Somalia

55. An estimated 1 million mines remain scattered throughout Somalia. The United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) has been given a mandate that extends to mine clearance. A mine-clearance project was undertaken by a commercial contractor in the north-west, but the security situation forced its termination. Owing to insecure and unstable conditions and the fact that some Somali mine-clearance capacity exists, the UNOSOM programme now focuses on employing Somali mine clearers as contractors, on an opportunistic basis, with supplemental training provided by UNOSOM as necessary.

Yemen

56. There have been consistent reports of land-mines around strategic sites in Yemen. Major water sources, water distribution networks and electricity lines are located in the affected regions. Land-mines hinder efforts to restore those facilities, thus complicating efforts to supply water and electricity to Aden and Abyan. In addition, unless mines are removed, the re-activation of farming and fishery activities will be restricted. WHO is undertaking rehabilitation of civilians disabled by land-mine injuries, including providing wheel chairs, artificial limbs and raw material for local manufacture of artificial limbs. A number of children have also suffered severe physical injuries from the armed conflict, including from land-mines. UNICEF is assessing the number, location and special needs of children in particularly difficult circumstances, to develop and initiate a project for trauma healing, mine-awareness education and other interventions to alleviate their special problems. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs is planning to deploy a land-mine information specialist to establish a database to enhance coordination and the safe conduct of humanitarian assistance activities in Yemen.

Former Yugoslavia

57. There are an estimated 2 to 5 million land-mines scattered throughout much of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Slovenia and parts of Serbia and Montenegro, and reportedly roughly 1 million additional land-mines are being laid each year. Those land-mines have been laid both by professionally trained military personnel in traditional minefields and more commonly by poorly trained militia in a random manner. Land-mines are often used against purely civilian targets in furtherance of various campaigns of ethnic cleansing. Whole villages are mined, road systems, power plants, bridges, dams and the areas around United Nations safe havens. Contrary to the provisions of the 1980 Inhumane Weapons Convention, mine locations are rarely reported to United Nations peace-keeping personnel and have caused significant casualties to United Nations peace-keeping forces. Since November 1993, six United Nations peace-keepers have been killed and 47 injured by land-mines in the former Yugoslavia. Mines constitute one of the major obstacles to the achievement of United Nations peace-keeping and humanitarian objectives in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. They impede the progress of United Nations peace-keeping patrols and delay or halt the delivery of United Nations humanitarian relief. Limited mine clearance is being undertaken by local teams and United Nations military staff. A major mine-clearance effort will need to be established when the political situation stabilizes. UNICEF is funding mine-awareness education through the mass media and is conducting teacher training to reduce the risk to schoolchildren.

D. Policy issues

58. The dangerous nature of the problem and the technical nature of the assistance required to combat it, as well as the fact that the mine problem does not respect sectoral distinctions or the substantive or chronological limits of mandates, demands that there be strong coordination in addressing it. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs, in exercising its role as focal point for the United Nations system with regard to land-mine issues, has been endeavouring to mobilize the resources and capacities of the system to ensure an effective and efficient response to the problem. The Department has been working closely with the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and the humanitarian agencies in that respect. In addition to its consideration of the mine problem on a country-by-country basis, it has been actively encouraging the United Nations system to develop a coherent land-mine policy.

59. To that end, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs convened an interdepartmental/inter-agency consultation on land-mine policy to examine all aspects of the institutional and administrative implications of United Nations involvement in mine-related activities. The objective of the consultations was to explore what existing capacities could be applied or adapted so as to address the mine problem appropriately, and to achieve a broad understanding about the institutional aspects that need to be addressed in the context of United Nations mine-action programmes. These include conceptual, administrative, financial and legal aspects, as well as safety precautions for field personnel and effective coordination mechanisms at field and Headquarters level. It was hoped that, as a result of that process, a model system could be developed that could be easily called upon and appropriately adjusted to circumstances whenever the United

Nations was faced with a mine problem. The Department is now attempting to develop a model on its own, based upon the lessons learned and the experiences gained so far, which could serve as a basis for considering new country programmes. It believes that the consultations convened so far have helped to develop a common understanding of the dimensions of the problem facing the United Nations system.

60. The United Nations is already establishing a set of standards of operation and safety procedures that should be applied in its mine-action programmes. The Departments of Humanitarian Affairs and Peace-keeping Operations have been collaborating on the collection and analysis of operational information from United Nations de-mining programmes. A set of standard guidelines and procedures for de-mining programmes is being prepared. These standards of operation are based upon currently applied procedures and should form the foundation of United Nations de-mining programmes in the future. It is hoped that the standards of operation and safety will also serve as a useful reference tool for Member States and organizations in setting up their own de-mining programmes.

61. In order to enhance the effective formulation and application of policy, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs has created a central de-mining database for the collection of global data on the land-mine problem. It is intended, initially, to assist in programme planning, technical support and coordination, enabling the United Nations to assess more accurately all aspects of the feasibility of mine-action efforts and ultimately to enhance efficiency and effectiveness. As it is expanded, its role as central repository and clearing-house for land-mine information will be enhanced, and it will become useful as a general research and reference tool for land-mine matters. The information contained in the database would be available to Member States, United Nations agencies, regional and non-governmental organizations, and others. It is hoped that the database will help support the de-mining efforts of various Member States and organizations. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs is currently at the stage of inputting data and welcomes all information that would be relevant for inclusion in the database.

62. The database would include all available information on the land-mine situation in various countries, including the number, type, and location of uncleared land-mines, and national capacities to clear them. Detailed information about land-mine types, land-mine manufacturers, land-mine export figures, land-mine casualty figures and de-mining technologies would also be included. The database would also contain data from all current United Nations operations, including mine systems encountered, equipment, methods and rates of clearance, casualty rates, rosters of trained personnel, effectiveness of contractors and costs, and would cross-reference to recommended standing operational procedures and medical and communications cover. The database would also contain information on non-governmental organization, regional organization, national and commercial efforts and capacities world wide. A companion technical database, containing detailed technical information about the operation of particular land-mines, their handling and other information relevant to their deactivation and removal, is also being established with the assistance of the United States. The technical database will directly enhance support of technical operations and operators in the field, the appropriate

adaptation and application of standards of operation, and the maintenance of proper safety precautions.

E. Funding issues

63. Possibilities for funding mine-action activities in affected countries vary greatly. The United Nations finds itself involved in providing peacemaking and peace-building assistance in countries where a wide variety of issues related to governance arise. United Nations assistance activities have been geared towards development of civilian, government capacities, as it is deemed that they will be most likely to attract future bilateral or multilateral financial assistance.

64. Where reliance upon government authorities to conduct mine-action programmes is not possible and where United Nations assistance is necessary, the latter has been tailored to meet the particular circumstances and funding implications have followed from them. For example, in Afghanistan, where no Government was able to assume responsibility, United Nations efforts were aimed at the creation of Afghan non-governmental organizations, though it is hoped that financial modalities for sustaining the programme on a long-term basis can be found as normalcy returns to Afghanistan. In Somalia, where some local capacity for mine clearance existed, United Nations assistance was aimed at contracting mine clearance to local groups, with some oversight to ensure performance. In countries where there is no United Nations peace-keeping mission, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs has solicited donor nation support for de-mining programmes. In countries where there is a peace-keeping involvement, United Nations assistance has often been provided on an integrated basis, with both voluntary and assessed contributions.

65. Once a land-mine problem has been identified in a country where United Nations operations are taking place and it has been determined that United Nations assistance in mine clearance will be necessary, the early start-up of operations is critical. Not only will a reduction of injury from mine accidents be a direct result, but the early alleviation of humanitarian emergencies, the meeting of peace-keeping operational objectives and the early return to normalcy will also be greatly facilitated. Political and financial constraints are often deterrents to such early start-up. While political constraints can often be overcome through further negotiation, this would be pointless in the absence of secure funding. Funding requirements in the early phases of mine action are significantly higher than in later phases, because of the higher personnel and equipment costs associated with start-up. There are often significant delays created by the process of mobilization of large sums through voluntary contributions, which cause unrecoverable delays in programme commencement, with a consequent cost in human suffering. Although resources made available through assessed peace-keeping contributions may be a swifter process, it is often highly desirable to begin at least preparatory mine-action activities (e.g. equipment procurement, information collection and collation, mine surveys, emergency clearance) prior even to Security Council consideration of a peace-keeping mandate, in order to facilitate the deployment of the eventual peace-keeping mission. The financial rules and regulations of the United Nations would prevent such activities in the absence of funding.

66. As noted in paragraph 19 above, the cost of clearance of the global land-mine problem, at present average costs, would be enormous - approximately $33 billion, at a minimum. Last year, the United Nations sought approximately $67 million for its mine-clearance assistance activities, of which some $42 million was sought through voluntary contributions and some $25 million was raised through assessed contributions for activities within the peace-keeping mandate. If the proliferation of land-mines were stopped in 1996, at current rates of funding and clearance it would still take almost 1,100 years to rid the world of the land-mines now in the ground. Even if clearance were to be focused on those land-mines which have the most direct impact on civilian populations, clearing cities and towns, roads and homes, it would still take more than three centuries of work at present clearance and funding rates.

67. Additional resources, both in terms of funding and resources in the field, must be found. With an additional $100 million in funding, the United Nations could significantly increase its capacity, both as regards areas addressed and operations in the field. Even with an additional $60 million it could be possible to increase greatly the number of countries receiving United Nations mine-clearance assistance and significantly enhance the overall United Nations de-mining programme capacity.

68. The focus of the additional funds should be to multiply the effectiveness of rather than replace existing sources of de-mining funds. The majority of de-mining operations occur in countries in which no peace-keeping operation exists or is envisioned. In such cases, only humanitarian contributions and development funds are available for funding. In areas where integrated de-mining programmes are carried out in conjunction with peace-keeping operations, further assistance is often required following the expiry of the peace-keeping mandate and voluntary contributions must be used to enable the continuation of the de-mining programme without interruption.

69. Recognizing the need for additional resources, the General Assembly asked the Secretary-General to examine the advisability of establishing a voluntary fund for assistance in mine clearance. Indeed, a multi-purpose trust fund that could make funds available for activities in the humanitarian and peace-building and development arenas would greatly enhance the effectiveness and timeliness of the international community's response to mine problems and to mine-assistance needs. In particular, it would facilitate on-the-spot assessments of the mine problems in infested countries and make possible the rapid commencement of mine-awareness education activities. It would expedite the emplacement of mine experts and mine-action programme coordinators in the field and the establishment of a systematic mine-information gathering and collation capacity, including a database, as well as the early conduct of surveys. Where necessary, it could enable the early establishment of training programmes, including preparation of materials and recruitment of personnel. It would permit financial means to be available for the early procurement of vital equipment necessary for the start of a de-mining programme and the execution of key clearance operations essential for the fulfilment of United Nations missions in-country. It could also help to ensure the continuity of funding when there are delays in the receipt of donors' contributions. The trust fund should not replace existing sources of funding. De-mining funds would continue to be raised through consolidated appeals and assessed peace-keeping contributions.

The voluntary trust fund would provide seed money to mine-action programmes and provide financing for activities for which funds would not otherwise be available.

70. Preliminary activities for the establishment of a trust fund have been carried out by staff of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and a number of Member States expressed support for such a fund in their replies to the Secretary-General's note verbale pursuant to resolution 48/7. It has thus been ascertained that the establishment of such a fund would be desirable. Terms of reference clearly defining its purpose, in accordance with the objectives of resolution 48/7, will be elaborated and made available to Member States. On that basis, Member States can pledge contributions to the fund.

71. The establishment and management of such a general trust fund or assistance in mine action would be governed by the United Nations Financial Regulations and Rules. Special care would be exercised to ensure that the operations and activities financed from the fund are consistent with the objectives, policies and procedures of the United Nations. Disbursements from the fund would be made on the basis of specific mine-action projects and operational mine-assistance activities, including cost plans. In that regard, the fund should be utilized in a manner that could ensure the maximum flexibility in achieving the overall objectives of the operation. This could include making funds available to United Nations humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations who are strong partners in United Nations mine-action programmes.

72. The voluntary trust fund should have strong management to ensure that the overall objectives of more effective mine action and strengthened coordination are being properly served. The specialized nature of mine action would also demand this. I will ask the Department of Humanitarian Affairs to assume overall responsibility for management and implementation of the trust fund, with the support and close cooperation of Department of Administration and Management. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs should exercise that responsibility, also in close consultation with the Department of Peace-keeping Operations when funds would be utilized for activities carried out in a peace-keeping theatre. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs will report at regular intervals on the utilization of the fund in the interest of effective management, evaluation and control, and the fund will be the subject of audit in accordance with United Nations Regulations and Rules. Member States will be kept informed through the usual channels of uses of the fund in connection with particular country programmes.

73. It is clear that, to be successful, the voluntary trust fund will require significant funding for a prolonged period of time. This means that the fund will require replenishment. In addition to the reporting requirements outlined above, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs will submit annually to Member States a comprehensive report on the activities of the fund. That report will indicate the amount of money remaining in the trust fund as at the beginning of the session of the General Assembly each year. It is envisioned that it will be necessary to seek replenishment for the fund every two years.

74. In some countries, the capacity and willingness to undertake mine-action campaigns exist, but funding is not always available. This includes States

where national capacities have been built with United Nations assistance. In those cases, methods of providing sufficient financial assistance to conduct de-mining operations must be explored. Apart from direct bilateral assistance, international financial institutions, including the regional development banks, would appear to be an appropriate avenue for exploration, as national de-mining efforts are essential prerequisites for economic and social development and must be based on legitimate activities of the State. Unfortunately, the dimensions and impact of the land-mine problem have only recently come to light and international financial institutions do not appear yet to have considered them fully at the policy level. This has appeared to limit possibilities for the long-term sustaining of national efforts with multilateral financial support, except where mine clearance is a prerequisite for specific activities being undertaken by those institutions.

75. Where national mine-action capacities have been built with United Nations assistance, the provision of narrow sectoral financial assistance may have disadvantages. Unfortunately, while any financial assistance is of course welcome and adjustments should be made to accommodate it within the context of the overall mission of the programme, this may tend to weaken already fragile centralized mine-action structures and to fragment national de-mining efforts and priorities. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs and World Bank personnel have met on several occasions to explore these issues, with a view to facilitating possibilities on a practical level for World Bank involvement with Governments to sustain national programmes. The matter will be pursued further with those institutions, since de-mining is quintessentially a development issue in so far as it is a fundamental prerequisite for further development activities.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STRENGTHENING COORDINATION

76. Whereas in 1988 the United Nations was involved in only one mine-assistance operation, today it is called upon to provide assistance in 12 countries, and several new assistance operations can be expected in the near future. In many respects, the challenge of responding to the many problems caused by uncleared land-mines is currently being met on an ad hoc basis. Because land-mines pose problems that cut across so many mandates, a large number of United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations have had to respond unilaterally to the problems they encounter in carrying out those mandates. Such a fragmented approach to assistance in mine clearance is undesirable and has in the past led to duplication of effort, inefficient allocation of resources, unclear lines of responsibility and an overall lack of direction. Rather, mine action should be well planned, integrated and well coordinated. The assistance should begin as early as is practicable and the objectives of the assistance should be clear and achievable within a predictable period.

77. Naturally, the assistance that may be required in any country will be specific to the conditions and circumstances as they exist. None the less, the assumptions underlying any assistance should be the same and it is possible to base all such assistance on basic operational models and approaches. To that end, the experiences and difficulties encountered in past assistance programmes

have been closely examined with a view to learning lessons, both positive and negative.

78. It has become apparent that there is a need for strengthened coordination and capacity, which can improve the effectiveness of United Nations assistance. Basically, the United Nations involvement in mine action has two dimensions, the geographic and the chronological. In terms of the former, activities are delineated between the field implementation and Headquarters support. The interrelationship between Headquarters and the field in the formulation, coordination and management of mine-clearance assistance programmes in infested countries should be a dynamic one. In terms of the chronological dimension, there is an optimum sequence for assistance and intervention. Mine action may begin at the earliest stages of United Nations intervention, as long as there is consent and proper security conditions exist. The mine issue should be considered in the context of any peacemaking initiatives being undertaken; within the context of the peace negotiations, the conflicting parties should undertake to respect international law governing obligations to remove mines, as well as to adhere to principles of cooperation in mine action. Where United Nations assistance in mine action is to be a feature of implementation of the peace agreement, the foundations for such assistance should also be included in the peace accord and mine action should begin early in order to facilitate expansion of the humanitarian programme and deployment of peace-keeping forces.

79. At the field level, there is also an optimal sequence for undertaking activities. As soon as is practicable, a general technical assessment of the problem and the local capacities for dealing with it should be made. That assessment will form the basis for any further assistance activities. Mine-awareness education for populations at risk is an essential component, which should be undertaken as soon as possible when a mine problem has been identified. Accordingly, mine-awareness instructors must be trained, educational materials developed, curricula and syllabuses tailored to particular circumstances, and access obtained to those at risk. United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations often undertake mine-awareness education programmes on behalf of the populations they serve. Government networks are sometimes also used for dissemination of information. In addition, public education activities may be included in the mandates of United Nations peace-keeping operations and information about mines could be included as an element of those activities. Educational materials need to reflect accurately the kinds of mines that may be encountered and the particular risks posed. Model materials and curricula, as well as basic mine information for inclusion in materials, should be maintained at a central level and made available to those wishing to become involved in awareness activities. United Nations agencies and their non-governmental organization partners in mine-awareness education may wish to share samples of materials used in the past and their experiences gained.

80. The early establishment of a mechanism for mine-information compilation, analysis and maintenance is an important element of humanitarian coordination in countries with mine problems. The initial information is provided as a result of the general technical assessment, as well as information formally provided by authorities. The development of the information mechanism requires the posting of mine specialists in the country and the establishment of a mine database with

mapping capabilities. The purpose of the assembled information would be strictly humanitarian and the up-to-date information on the mine situation would be available to appropriate humanitarian organizations operating in the country. Mine-survey and marking activities would be one of the important elements of the in-country information mechanism. Not only is mine information an important element supporting humanitarian coordination generally, but a strong coordination mechanism in-country, supported by the mine-information capabilities, is essential for any integrated United Nations presence in-country and for a comprehensive involvement in mine action.

81. The creation of a national capacity for mine action entails the training and equipping of mine-clearance technicians, the creation of a field support structure (including medical and logistical aspects) and training in overall programme management. Training of the mine-clearance technicians and supervisors normally involves both classroom time and practical experience. Not only must schools be established and appropriately equipped, but instructors must be provided and curricula and syllabuses must ensure that proper operational and safety skills are taught. These should be in accordance with United Nations standard operating procedures. Trained mine-clearance technicians must then be organized into teams, properly equipped, remunerated and deployed to the field with appropriate supervision and support. A self-insurance scheme should be instituted to provide compensation in case of accidents. De-mining may require a degree of medical support that may not be available in some countries, including paramedics, surgical expertise and facilities, evacuation facilities, and appropriate medicines. In areas where those facilities do not exist, such a medical capacity must be created. Contacts with appropriate intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations may be required to ensure that the required national medical capacities are created side-by-side with de-mining capacities. Those staffing field support structures, including medical, logistics, financial and communications elements, must be trained and in place as mine-clearance teams are deployed.

82. National authorities may need to be designated or created with responsibility for mine action. The capacity to administer and manage, including financial aspects, is essential for sustaining any national mine-action programme. Special training may therefore be warranted, both at the central and the field management levels. Such training may involve classroom work as well as on-the-job activities. The latter may involve the progressive transfer of responsibility for managing aspects of the programme to trainees.

83. An important and sometimes difficult element of assistance is the schedule for phasing it out. It is felt that, ideally, United Nations technical assistance should enable the creation of a sustainable national mine-action capacity within 24 months, although political, technical and financial considerations could sometimes dictate longer periods of assistance. Once the programme has gained a certain momentum, a critical evaluation should be undertaken of the capacity of the programme to sustain itself after assistance is terminated. When assistance is provided in a peace-keeping environment, that evaluation should be made about six months prior to the end of the mandate, in order to ensure that the proper foundations for continuation of the programme (including, possibly, continued assistance) have been built.

84. A national mine-action programme cannot be sustained in the absence of management capabilities, proper equipment and secure funding. Arrangements to transfer programme assets to national ownership, if necessary, should be put into place in a timely manner. It is felt that continued financial assistance alone, which basically amounts to budget support, is not an appropriate form of continued assistance and efforts will be made during the transition phase to assist national authorities to explore avenues for obtaining the funding necessary.

85. Headquarters support for planning and implementation of mine-clearance assistance programmes should also be strengthened. Apart from regular programme support functions, such as monitoring and reporting, those support responsibilities include the establishment and promulgation of standards of operation and safety regulations, the maintenance of a roster of qualified de-mining personnel, the establishment and maintenance of databases of technical and programme information, the provision of technical advice, administrative support and ensuring proper integration of de-mining programmes with other humanitarian and United Nations activities in-country. Interdepartmental and inter-agency cooperation and consultation must take place on an ongoing basis to identify priority needs and objectives, to examine programme proposals and methodologies for implementation, and to ensure that conditions for mine-clearance assistance exist. Headquarters is also involved in resource mobilization through voluntary appeals and assessed budgets, and administration of voluntary trust funds. There is also an important Headquarters liaison function supporting programme implementation, involving donors, non-governmental organizations, financial institutions and regional organizations. Finally, an essential part of headquarters support entails the centralized compilation of lessons learned in order to enhance the Organization's ability to continue to strengthen the effectiveness of its assistance.

86. Primary responsibility for all of the field programme and Headquarters support elements described above should be allocated to one office, in order to ensure consistency of approach, continuity of activities and maximum efficiency. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs, in fulfilling its role as focal point for land-mine activities, has been taking a lead in that respect, with technical support provided by the Department of Peace-keeping Operations. This would appear to be a satisfactory approach, in view of the humanitarian nature of the problem, the fact that not all assistance is provided through peace-keeping operations and that assistance is usually required beyond the duration of the peace-keeping mandate and that the Department of Humanitarian Affairs has enjoyed very good cooperation from the humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations on that issue.

87. However, the current capacities of the Departments of Humanitarian Affairs and Peace-keeping Operations are not sufficient to provide the level of support required. There are, at present, only one staff member and a consultant working with the Department of Humanitarian Affairs on the programme side and two staff members working with the Department of Peace-keeping Operations on the technical side. A further integration of the cooperation could be useful. In addition, there are currently a small number of mine-action programme managers and/or technical advisors in the field (Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, Mozambique). The field managers are attached to the humanitarian representation in the

country and, with the exception of the Deputy Director for De-mining of the United Nations Office for Humanitarian Assistance Coordination in Mozambique, are supported through voluntary contributions.

88. In the current reorganization of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, a new Mine Action Section is being created, with responsibility for carrying out the Department's functions as focal point. Assuming that technical support continues to be provided by the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, four additional staff positions will be required in the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in order to service properly the United Nations requirements in mine assistance at the central level, including country programme support, the further development of models and standards, strengthening of the network of cooperation and maintenance of up-to-date databases to support the system's mine-action activities.

89. As the reorganization takes effect, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs will also explore the establishment of stand-by capacities similar to those it has established for other aspects of its work. In many operations, the Department has sought to obtain direct support for mine-action assistance programmes through contributions "in kind" of personnel. Certain elements of mine-action programmes are of limited duration and require specialized expertise or technology, such as, for example, technical assessments and surveys. Those elements would be most susceptible to support through a stand-by capacity system, facilitating a quick and effective response to mine problems. Stand-by training capacities could also be envisioned, for example, in mine-action programme management or in mine-mapping database establishment, similar to training provided for personnel involved in other fields of humanitarian emergencies. Several Member States have already indicated that they would support the development of such stand-by capacities.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

90. The presence of uncleared land-mines presents the classic example of the "civilianization" of war, resulting in an ever-increasing number of non-combatant casualties. The problem is a humanitarian one because it not only creates increased needs for humanitarian assistance, it also impedes the delivery of that assistance. Uncleared land-mines adversely affect almost every part of the humanitarian and peace-building mission of the United Nations, from the earliest phases of the United Nations response to many an emergency to the latter phases of the continuum from relief to development. Indeed, activities in the development sector will be prevented altogether unless land-mines are cleared. Peace-keeping operations of the United Nations are also faced with problems presented by the presence of uncleared land-mines, which inhibit the timely realization of deployment and other operational objectives. The problem, however, does not confine itself to areas in which there are peace-keeping missions and many of the Organization's current mine-clearance assistance programmes are in countries without a peace-keeping presence. In order to ensure a consistent, coherent and comprehensive approach to the problem, overall responsibility should best be given to the humanitarian component of the United Nations Secretariat. The problem must be approached primarily from a

humanitarian perspective and in an integrated humanitarian/peace-keeping manner when peace-keeping objectives are also implicated.

91. Moreover, the 110 million land-mines currently laid pose a humanitarian problem whose scope and effects are so widespread that they dwarf the current efforts to counter the problem. If the United Nations is to begin to address the problem adequately, additional financial and personnel resources are needed, the department currently serving as focal point for land-mine-related activities within the United Nations system must be strengthened and Member States must cooperate to stop the proliferation of land-mines. Even with a concerted effort by Governments, humanitarian organizations and the United Nations, it will take years to solve the problem.

92. Recognizing the need for additional financial resources, a voluntary trust fund for assistance in mine-action is being created and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs has been asked to assume overall responsibility for management and implementation of the trust fund and to develop terms of reference in cooperation with the Department of Administration and Management. The trust fund will be used to augment funds available from other sources to finance United Nations mine-action activities in mine-infested States. The United Nations has appreciated the generous responses of a number of donor States to the financial requirements of its humanitarian programmes and is confident that the humanitarian needs in connection with mine action will be no exception. It is hoped that, given the global and humanitarian nature of the mine problem, broad-based financial support for the trust fund will be forthcoming.

93. There is a tremendous degree of solidarity among Member States, humanitarian organizations and the United Nations with regard to the land-mine problem and a willingness to work together to find a solution to the problem posed by uncleared land-mines. All the elements of the international community have begun to recognize the enormous humanitarian cost exacted by those indiscriminate weapons and there is a willingness to cooperate to find innovative ways to help rid the world of the scourge. There has been strong support for the creation of national capacities for mine clearance, which can empower States to deal with their own mine problems. Given the magnitude of the challenge posed by uncleared land-mines, it is only through that type of continued cooperation, with humanitarian organizations, United Nations agencies and peace-keeping missions, and Member States working together, that it will be possible to make an impact on this enormous humanitarian problem.

94. Equally, mine action appears to foster national solidarity. Experience has shown that mine clearance is an activity that promotes national reconciliation efforts by involving once hostile parties in a mutually beneficial undertaking, thus reinforcing the confidence necessary for the creation of lasting peace and contributing to economic and social rehabilitation. Local mine clearing efforts supported by the United Nations in Afghanistan, Cambodia and Somalia have shown positive results and have commanded the respect of the populations concerned and similar results will surely be demonstrated in other countries where assistance in mine action is undertaken. The United Nations has taken the lead in de-mining efforts world wide through mine-action programmes, technical assistance, mobilizing public opinion and providing aid to victims. Stronger

economic and political support for that United Nations effort is now urgently needed.

95. As important as mine clearance and mine-awareness education are, they are not the answer to the problem. The United Nations and other international humanitarian organizations would have to increase the scope of their mine-clearance efforts more than 20 times just to maintain the problem at its present levels, at current rates of clearance. Such an increase is impossible. Member States must therefore take steps effectively to halt the proliferation and use of land-mines around the world. The ongoing efforts of the parties to the 1980 Inhumane Weapons Convention to strengthen the existing humanitarian law on the use of land-mines are welcomed, as well as those of various mine-producing countries who have established moratoriums on the transfer of land-mines, but much more must be done. Areas for movement forward are outlined in paragraphs 22 to 26 above. This enormous humanitarian problem can only be overcome by establishing an effective control regime that places strict limits on the production, use and transfer of all land-mines.

Notes

1/ See The United Nations Disarmament Yearbook, vol. 5: 1980 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.81.IX.4), appendix VII.

2/ Ibid., Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby Traps and Other Devices.

UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/49/357/Add.1
20 September 1994
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC/ENGLISH/
SPANISH

Forty-ninth session
Item 22 of the provisional agenda*

ASSISTANCE IN MINE CLEARANCE

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Pursuant to the request contained in resolution 48/7, of 19 October 1993, the Secretary-General, by a note verbale dated 23 March 1994, invited Member States and bodies with observer status with the General Assembly to transmit to him for inclusion in the report the information requested in paragraph 6 of the resolution.

2. The present addendum reproduces the replies received as at 15 August 1994. Further replies will be included in further addenda to the present report.

II. INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM MEMBER STATES

AFGHANISTAN

[Original: English]

[6 June 1994]

1. The relevant authorities of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, pursuant to resolution 48/7 of 19 October 1993, entitled "Assistance in mine clearance", submit the following as their views as well as proposals concerning the following:

(a) The problems caused by the increasing presence of mines and other unexploded devices resulting from armed conflicts;

(b) The manner in which the United Nations contribution to the solution of problems relating to mine clearance could be strengthened.

2. This response is submitted with reference to the particular problems in Afghanistan, namely, the presence of between 10 and 30 million land-mines planted in Afghan soil during the 14 years of the armed aggression of the former Soviet Union Red Army, as well as by the Afghan communist regime.

The problems caused by the increasing presence of mines and other unexploded devices resulting from armed conflicts

3. In his report on the work of the Organization in September 1993, the Secretary-General of the United Nations said: "Of all the tasks involved in setting a nation on a new road to peace and prosperity, perhaps none has the immediate urgency of mine clearance ... no attempt to restore a sense of community and security can succeed without effective land-mine removal".

4. According to the United Nations Focus (DPI-October 1993-13M), among the 10 war-stricken countries and territories, Afghanistan is the most affected country in the world as far as the problem of land-mines is concerned.

5. Surely the gravity and cruelty of the threat posed to Afghan life as a result of the existence of millions of land-mines and other unexploded ordnance in the Afghan soil cannot be overemphasized. The problem has seriously jeopardized all efforts towards not only the reconstruction, rehabilitation and repatriation of refugees, but, above all, the restoration of peace and normalcy and of the basic services of human need. Here are some of the ramifications of land-mines on different phases of Afghan life.

1. Economic consequences

Impact on agriculture

6. Afghanistan is a predominantly agricultural country. Eighty per cent of the population of Afghanistan are engaged in agriculture. Before the former Soviet Union's aggression, agriculture used to contribute about 58 per cent of the national income and provided employment to 70 per cent of all manpower. It counted for over 60 per cent of exports and also provided raw material for local industry.

7. Pre-Soviet invasion statistics show that in 1977 Afghanistan had 309 million hectares of land under cultivation and produced 7.7 million tons of grain, almost reaching the level of self-sufficiency, only importing 2,500 tons of grain, mainly as improved cultivation seeds.

8. As a result of the 14 years of war and specifically because of three main factors, namely, intensity of Soviet bombardment on the villages, engagement of farmers in the jihad and the nation-wide armed liberation struggle, and, more importantly, the implantation of millions of land-mines in agricultural lands, the agricultural production dropped by 55 per cent.

9. According to the Mine-Clearance Planning Agency, involved in the survey of minefields in support of the United Nations Mine Clearance Programme since 1990, covering 339 districts of 29 provinces, of which 162 districts were reported to have acute mine problems, there are 595 minefields located on agricultural lands, constituting an area of 78,343,231 square miles, which represents only 20.2 per cent of the total mined area.

10. One of the ramifications and impacts of land-mines is the disability of more than one million Afghans who could otherwise have played their role in the reconstruction of their homeland. This large number of Afghan citizens are permanently taken out of the work force of Afghan society.

Impact on irrigation systems

11. As explained in the report of the National Survey of the Land-Mine Situation in Afghanistan (Progress and present situation of the United Nations Mine-Clearance Programme for Afghanistan, vol. I, 1993, part III, p. 17), irrigation canals in the 29 provinces were mined, mainly in order to limit as much as possible the resources for agriculture, thus depopulating areas and preventing Mujahidin from receiving assistance from the local population.

12. On the other hand, those who did not choose to leave, in the light of the bitter experience of their relatives or friends who had been killed or had lost their limbs while working on irrigation and water canals, stayed away from irrigation canals. Consequently, many irrigation canals, having not been properly maintained, were filled with debris, leaving hundreds of thousands of hectares of land arid. This represents another destructive potential of land-mines in disabling irrigation systems, which requires immediate international attention.

Impact on roads

13. The economic infrastructure of Afghanistan, as a land-locked and, in the meantime, war-stricken least developed country among the developing countries, depends heavily on transit roads. Roads are considered vital to the improvement of the economy of Afghanistan, where the roads were already in bad condition. According to the Mine-Clearance Planning Agency an area of 19,972,340 square miles of road was declared potentially mined, of which only 5.4 million square miles were announced clear.

14. During the war, the Soviet regime, on one side, and, in some cases, the Mujahidin on the other, were heavily concentrating on mining the roads and bridges, thus stopping the military machinery from reaching the villages. As a result of the presence of the mines, some of the roads became completely inaccessible.

15. The Mujahidin were using mainly anti-vehicle mines.

16. The transport sector was very seriously damaged as a result of the mines implanted on roads, stopping the flow of food, commodities and products between towns and villages.

17. According to available statistics, 2,033.9 kilometres of roads are to be rebuilt and 676 kilometres repaired. These roads were destroyed mainly as a result of land-mines, bombardment and, in the meantime, as a consequence of war and fear of land-mines that left the roads and bridges without maintenance.

Impact on livestock

18. Another bitter consequence of this destructive man-made phenomenon is the killing of thousands of animals, such as cows, donkeys, mules, camels, sheep and goats, by land-mines, as explained in part II of the 1993 annual report of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan.

19. Land-mines also caused the annihilation of thousands of livestock because of the unavailability of grazing land, which is again the result of the implantation of land-mines on these types of land. According to the Mine-Clearance Planning Agency, an area of 11,727,536 square miles was declared potentially mined and, in the last two years of operation, only close to 35 per cent of the area was announced cleared.

2. Social and psychological consequences

20. Although statistics available in the Islamic State of Afghanistan on the number of victims of land-mines during the 14 years of war indicate a high number of casualties, in preparation of this response, however, it was preferred to rely upon accounts, figures and statistics given in official reports of the United Nations.

21. Paragraph 53 of the report of Mr. Felix Ermacora, Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights, on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session (A/48/584, dated 16 November 1993) states "Mine-blast injuries in Afghanistan continue to be very numerous. The Special Rapporteur was informed that some 1 million persons had lost limbs during the past 14 years, approximately 300,000 of whom had lost both limbs". Accordingly, Mr. Ermacora, in paragraph 134 of his report, recommended that "every effort should be made to broaden and accelerate the process of mine clearing".

22. To point out just one simple fact about the magnitude of the spectre of land-mines in Afghanistan, an eyewitness who recently returned from Kandahar in Afghanistan recounted that three months ago in Shari-i Naw of Kandahar two children who repatriated to their homeland were brutally blown up by the mines that were planted inside their homes years ago. So, the presence of mines not only threatens the agricultural infrastructure of the traditional productive economic sector of the country, but also endangers human life even in many residential areas.

23. This problem is so grave in some provinces and areas that perhaps the present generation and their sons and daughters, as well as the next generation, cannot walk in many areas of their homeland free from the deadly fear of being killed or losing their limbs. This situation, as well as the over 1 million disabled due to the land-mines laid during the war has psychologically battered the Afghan nation, the effects of which damage will continue for many decades to come.

24. It is hoped that the world community understands the pain and agony of the thousands of parents who every moment of their life endure deep suffering by looking at their very young children with no limbs as burdens on future society.

25. This deadly and inhuman phenomenon will create many other social and economic problems in the future.

3. Impact on the repatriation of refugees and internally displaced persons

26. As a result of the political changes in the country, namely, the collapse of the communist regime and the establishment of the Islamic State on 27 April 1992, about 1.5 million Afghan refugees repatriated from Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

27. However, land-mines greeted the returnees as they were heading to their villages. Many returnees were killed and lost their limbs. Consequently, the repatriation of refugees suffered a serious set-back.

28. As stated in the report of the Secretary-General under agenda item 41 (A/48/323, dated 24 September 1993, and Add.1), the presence of land-mines is one of the greatest obstacles to the successful return of the refugees. Paragraph 14 states:

> "Statistics available from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) hospitals for the war-wounded show a marked and tragic increase in mine injuries and indicate that the overwhelming majority of the Afghans brought into their hospitals as a result of such injuries were returnees. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that an increasing proportion of those refugees who had indicated their willingness to return from neighbouring countries is reluctant to do so because it is known that the areas to which they wish to return are mined."

29. ICRC statistics also show that an alarming increase in mine casualties was noted among recently returned refugees and displaced persons. According to the ICRC accounts, almost 1,500 mine casualties were treated in a short period of time at their hospitals in Kabul, Peshawar and Quetta, of whom about 30 per cent were children.

The manner in which the United Nations contribution to the solution of problems relating to mine clearance could be strengthened

30. Although the question is of a general nature, the response to the above aspect of the land-mine problem is given in the form of recommendations, with particular reference to ways and means of solving the problem in Afghanistan in the light of the experiences gained over the last two years.

31. It begins by the following quotation (United Nations Secretary-General, Consolidated Appeal for Emergency Humanitarian Assistance for Afghanistan, June-December 1992):

> "Mines and unexploded bombs are the most cruel and indiscriminate obstacle to a return to normal life in Afghanistan. Mines which were laid in villages, roads, agricultural land and irrigation systems will remain a hazard in many parts of the country for years to come."

32. The Secretary-General very rightly identified land-mines and unexploded bombs as the most cruel and indiscriminate obstacle to a return of normal life in Afghanistan.

33. Afghanistan played a key role in the collapse of international communism, the end of the cold war and of world bipolarity, as well as in the creation of an international atmosphere more favourable to a world with much less fear of nuclear confrontation. The price the Afghan people paid for this humane and historic mission was a heavy one: 1.7 million killed, more than 1 million

disabled, the country's economic infrastructure destroyed and more than 10 million land-mines still on Afghan soil.

34. The Afghan nation certainly deserves better than what the international community has done for it so far. One of the immediate actions the world community could take in order to assist the victimized Afghan nation is to intensify efforts and increase financial and technical assistance on mine clearing in Afghanistan. The United Nations and the international community are committed to the reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan by unanimously adopting resolution 48/208 of 21 December 1993. Removal of land-mines is the first step towards the realization of that objective.

Proposals

35. Efforts to be taken at the United Nations and the international level:

(a) The General Assembly should give priority of consideration at the plenary each year to the item on land-mines;

(b) An international scientific committee on land-mines should be established under the Department of Humanitarian Affairs with a view to:

(i) Studying on a continuous basis the problems of land-mines in war-stricken countries;

(ii) Serve as a coordinating body for all the activities on national, subregional, regional and by non-governmental organizations in the field of mine-awareness, training, survey and mine clearance;

(iii) Initiate tripartite agreements between the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, non-governmental organizations and Governments concerned, thus ensuring successful mine clearance, awareness and training projects and programmes;

(c) The General Assembly should draft an international convention banning the production and sale of land-mines and, as a first step, put a moratorium on the production and sale of such weapons;

(d) A global conference should be held in 1995 on the problem of land-mines, with a view to drafting and adopting an international strategy for mine clearance, as well as alleviating the disastrous consequences of land-mines in war-stricken countries;

(e) 1995-2005 should be declared an international decade against land-mines;

(f) An international voluntary fund should be established under the Department of Humanitarian Affairs to make available funds and resources for strengthening de-mining programmes in war-stricken developing countries.

36. Efforts to be taken in cooperation and partnership with the United Nations at the national level. As stated above, owing to the particular and severe problem of land-mines with which Afghanistan is faced, the following specific proposals are submitted:

(a) The Secretary-General would be requested to make a fresh appeal to the donor countries to provide resources to meet a $20 million annual budget for mine clearance in Afghanistan.

It is reassuring that the United Nations activities in Cambodia in the area of mine clearance have been extensive. The establishing of a trust fund for Cambodia by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), namely, the UNDP trust fund for capacity-building in de-mining operations for Cambodia, which was signed on 13 November 1993 by Mr. James Gustave Speth, Administrator, UNDP, in which UNDP will help raise $10 million a year for the coming two years.

Under the auspices of UNDP, interested Governments have been approached by means of a letter dated 17 November 1993, from Mr. Speth, and Mr. Jan Eliasson, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, to contribute to the fund, as well as 30 international advisory personnel. To date, $6 million has been raised for the trust fund, according to the UNDP Update (vol. 7, No. 5, 14 March 1994).

Since the situation of land-mines in Afghanistan is the most critical compared to all victim countries, it would be crucial that the United Nations should urgently study the possibility of establishing a trust fund for de-mining purposes for Afghanistan in the same line and concept as the one for Cambodia contained in the terms of reference of the UNDP trust fund for capacity-building in de-mining operations for Cambodia of 13 November 1993.

(b) The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance should intensify efforts towards further involvement of the local Afghan population who are more familiar with the environment. Such an extensive involvement would contribute positively to the following:

(i) Create jobs and income for the local population who, as a legacy of 14 years of war, have no other occupation than to carry arms;

(ii) The active and practical participation of the local population in mine clearance would psychologically relieve and assure the villagers that the land-mines would no longer be a danger to their safety and security. It would, in the meantime, boost agricultural activities and production;

(iii) Ensure a more speedy achievement of the de-mining objective.

(c) There seems to be a sense of urgency needed in the de-mining process in Afghanistan. The process is not advancing as fast as it should, mainly as a result of the lack of adequate financial resources to support the de-mining programmes. Donor countries and institutions seem to be less enthusiastic in contributing cash to the programme.

To avoid interruption of de-mining, it would be advisable that the United Nations undertake a specific programme of grain-for-de-mining. The donor and other countries would be requested to support the de-mining programmes of the United Nations Office in Afghanistan by contributing grain to the Office, delivered to Peshawar, Pakistan, where the Office would transfer the grain shipments to the priority mine-affected areas inside Afghanistan. The Office will decide on the advisability of using either cash or grain on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the availability of budget and grain.

BOLIVIA

[Original: Spanish]

[10 June 1994]

1. The Governments of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela, parties to the Cartagena Agreement, in consonance with their general interest in disarmament matters, as evidenced by the international and regional instruments to which we are parties and the Galapagos (18 December 1989) and Cartagena (4 December 1991) presidential Declarations in the context of the Andean Group, express their satisfaction at the importance accorded by the General Assembly, in adopting its resolution 48/7, to the serious problems caused by the presence of mines laid in various regions and to the need to strengthen and improve coordination of the activities being undertaken by the international community, in particular through the United Nations system, for their removal.

2. The countries parties to the Cartagena Agreement are concerned at the seriousness of the problem of mines, the proliferation and indiscriminate effect of which impede development. The consequences, now becoming apparent, of the problem of mines, detailed in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "An agenda for development" (A/48/935), merit the attention and require the commitment of the international community as a whole if they are to be overcome.

3. In connection with the possibility referred to in paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 48/7 of establishing a voluntary trust fund to finance programmes relating to mine clearance, the view of the countries parties to the Cartagena Agreement is that such a fund should be established with contributions from the mine-exporting countries and voluntary contributions by Member States.

BULGARIA

[Original: English]

[10 June 1994]

1. The Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (Inhumane Weapons Convention) regulates the use of land-mines, booby traps and other devices in international armed conflicts and during de-mining operations, once hostilities have ended. Breaches of those provisions

have severe consequences, as land-mines and other unexploded devices remain extremely dangerous for a very long period of time, if left in the battlefield after the termination of an armed conflict. Such negative effects have been witnessed in a number of situations around the world, especially because the majority of armed conflicts in the last few years have been of non-international character, a trend that increases the proliferation and the indiscriminate use of land-mines.

2. Among the most common negative consequences of the indiscriminate use of land-mines are the following:

(a) The victims are mainly women, children and farmers, rather than combatants;

(b) In a number of countries, there are inadequate sources of medical experience and equipment when it comes to the treatment of a large number of land-mine victims, which leads to a greater loss of life;

(c) Because of the precision and longer periods of time involved in the surgical treatment of land-mine wounds, a vast stock of blood containers and a blood transfusion network are necessary, another scarcity in many countries;

(d) The rehabilitation process requires expertise and sufficient supplies of artificial limbs;

(e) The typical massive and indiscriminate use of land-mines makes whole regions impossible to live in, to develop farming or industry in, thus causing economic disasters;

(f) Considerable refugee movements, both within and outside a nation's territory, further aggravate the economic and social situation.

3. In order to avoid or minimize those negative effects, the de-mining activities should be properly organized. De-mining is a complex process and its success depends on the strict observance of the provisions of Protocol II of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects on the exchange of all information concerning the location of minefields, mines and booby traps in the territory of the adverse party. Exchange of information regarding the technical composition of the mines laid is another requirement for successful de-mining. These provisions and requirements are often neglected, especially in internal armed conflicts. In other cases, there can be loss of records and documentation owing to combat conditions. In cases of use of remotely delivered mines, it is possible to indicate the area of the minefield, but not always its exact boundaries or the location of the mines involved. All this makes de-mining a rather costly operation, especially when the international voluntary fund is to be donated by States, as well as international humanitarian governmental and non-governmental organizations. Such a fund could be utilized, inter alia, to finance the rehabilitation needs of mine victims, as well as for de-mining activities, the organization of international supply of military, medical and other specialists, for training facilities for de-mining engineers and medical crews, and so on.

4. The Government of Bulgaria is in the process of elaborating a coherent and long-term policy concerning the international aspects of the mine problem world wide.

EGYPT

[Original: Arabic]

[29 June 1994]

1. There are in Egyptian territory 22.7 million mines, scattered over an area of 236,469 hectares in the Western Desert and Sinai, that need to be cleared. These mines constitute an obstacle to economic development projects and to movement for purposes of tourism inside Egypt.

2. The United Nations can contribute to the solution of the problem in the following ways:

(a) Training of officers and non-commissioned officers from the Egyptian Army in countries that have capacities and expertise in mine clearance;

(b) Provision without charge of up-to-date information on mine-clearance operations;

(c) Prov_sion of 170 million Egyptian pounds and $142 million for the implementation of the plan for mine clearance in the Arab Republic of Egypt.

FINLAND

[Original: English]

[19 July 1994]

1. Finland agrees with the point raised in the reply by the European Union, namely, that a distinction needs to be made between the humanitarian assistance/post-conflict peace-building on the one hand and the preventive/disarmament aspect on the other. It should, however, be noted that these aspects do not fully exclude each other.

2. The latter aspect, that is, the disarmament aspect, should also be emphasized when considering the implementation of resolution 48/7. In that respect, it should be noted the work initiated for the forthcoming Review Conference of the 1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects.

3. The focus of the review of this Convention is agreed by the States Parties to be on the preparation of concrete proposals for the amendments to Protocol II of the Convention, that is, the so-called mine protocol ("Protocol II on

Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby Traps and Other Devices").

4. According to the States parties, the purpose of the work is, first of all, to strengthen restrictions on the use of anti-personnel mines and, in particular, those without self-neutralizing or self-destruction mechanisms. Likewise, the verification system for the provisions of the Protocol is supposed to be considered and opportunities to be studied for broadening the scope of the Protocol to cover armed conflicts that are not of an international character, that is, the internal conflicts. Also, the questions closely linked to the issue of mine clearance, for example, those of recording of all the mines/ minefields and rendering of all the information of their location for the mine clearers after hostilities, should be dealt with in that connection.

5. Finland, as one of the States parties of the Convention, fully supports these goals of the review and wishes that necessary amendments could consequently be approved to the Protocol. The continuous civilian casualties and other severe consequences to civilian population of millions of uncleared mines in various parts of the world call for the international community to intensify its efforts against irresponsible use of anti-personnel mines.

6. The ongoing work of the Governmental Expert Group now preparing the Review Conference of the 1980 Convention and the outcome of the Conference itself, should, in Finland's view, be duly taken into account in the forthcoming report of the Secretary-General requested in resolution 48/7.

7. With regard to the humanitarian aspects of the problem, Finland recognizes the importance and urgency of mine clearance in countries that have been affected by armed conflicts. The indiscriminate use of land-mines, especially anti-personnel mines, constitutes a severe danger to civilian populations. Such use of land-mines also contributes to displacement and blocks humanitarian access. Furthermore, the indiscriminate use of land-mines and the resulting severe difficulties in their de-activation and clearance delay post-conflict peace-building and rehabilitation efforts.

8. The primary responsibility for mine clearance lies with the States in whose territories land-mines are located. Taking into account the difficult post-conflict conditions and the high cost of de-mining programmes, the assistance of the international community is, however, needed in most cases. In view of the magnitude of the problem and limited resources, it is important that international assistance to mine clearance is well coordinated and effective.

9. Finland attaches great importance to the role of the United Nations in mine-clearance activities. Mine-clearance programmes should be seen as an integral part of the coordinated United Nations response to humanitarian and post-conflict peace-building needs of countries affected by armed conflicts.

10. In this context, Finland welcomes the appointment by the Secretary-General of a United Nations de-mining expert with a coordinating role between the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department of Peace-keeping Operations. With regard to coordination between the United Nations agencies participating in humanitarian relief operations, the Department of Humanitarian

Affairs should act as the focal point. Provisions for de-mining programmes, including information and training components, should be included in Department of Humanitarian Affairs-coordinated consolidated appeals. It is also important to enhance coordination between the United Nations and other relevant actors in this field, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and non-governmental organizations.

11. Finland has provided financial assistance to the de-mining programme in Afghanistan, through the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance, for several years. In 1993, the Finnish assistance amounted to 3 million Finnish marks, which level is expected to be maintained also in 1994. In addition, a contribution of 0.5 million Finnish marks is planned for de-mining activities in Cambodia. Finnish technical expertise and equipment form a part of contributions towards the implementation of United Nations mine-clearance programmes.

GREECE*

[Original: English]

[17 June 1994]

1. The Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations has the honour to communicate the European Union's views on "assistance in mine clearance".

2. A distinction needs to be made between the humanitarian assistance aspect - post-conflict peace-building on one hand, and the preventive/disarmament aspect on the other hand (1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, (1980 Convention); resolution 48/75 K, entitled "Moratorium on the expert of anti-personnel land-mines", of 16 December 1993).

3. In "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277-S/24111), the Secretary-General very clearly highlighted the urgency of mine clearance in countries that have been victims of a conflict and the multidimensional aspect of the consequences of the presence of undetonated mines and other explosive devices. The presence of land-mines, because of their indiscriminate effect, not only represents a danger to the civilian population and an exorbitant economic, medical and social cost, but is also an obstacle to the restoration of basic services, already difficult in war-torn countries. The ever-increasing use of mines and other explosive devices during armed conflicts has taken an intolerable toll of victims, especially among the civilian population. When hostilities cease, minefields and other areas ridden with unexploded devices are frequently left unmarked. Consequently, they are a continuing danger to civilian populations and also to the personnel participating in mine-clearance operations. The presence of unexploded mines and other devices, particularly along communications routes and on farmlands, also seriously hampers the movement and return of large numbers of

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* Also on behalf of the European Union.

refugees or displaced persons, the economic recovery and reconstruction and the restoration of a normal social order.

4. The European Union is fully aware that in many countries mine clearance is the prerequisite to the shipment of humanitarian relief and to economic and social recovery, and looks forward to the proposals that the Secretariat might present in order to enhance assistance to mine clearance and its coordination within the United Nations.

5. While the primary role for mine clearance lies with the State in whose territory the mines are located, the profoundly disorganized situation of countries ravaged by years of conflict and the complex, costly nature of the programmes to be implemented must also be taken into account. The contribution of the international community, whether on a bilateral basis or through regional organizations or United Nations agencies, is therefore a key factor in dealing with the disastrous consequences of the presence of mines.

6. The European Union continues to attach great importance to efforts aimed at making adherence to the 1980 Convention and its relevant Protocols more universal and improving the implementation of their existing provisions. The European Union is playing a leading role in the preparatory work for the Conference on the Review of the 1980 Convention and in particular its Protocol II on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby Traps and Other Devices, as a matter of priority. Given the gravity and the urgency of the land-mine problem, which has been illustrated by several recent events, the European Union will continue to work towards the success of those negotiations with a view to providing more systematic solutions to the land-mine problem in the future.

7. The European Council is very conscious of the land-mine problem and a continuing dialogue on the question is taking place between the European Parliament and the European Council. The problem is also being discussed in the meetings of specialized working groups within the framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy.

8. As far as assistance in mine clearance is concerned, the European Union has contributed to many important programmes. These programmes fall within the context of support for humanitarian aid and rehabilitation (development assistance).

9. The European Union, through the European Commission, has participated in the financing of a certain number of de-mining operations in the following countries: Afghanistan, Cambodia, Iraq, Mozambique and Somalia. From 1992 to the beginning of 1994, the amount set aside for these operations has been ECU 14 million.

10. The financing of these operations is based on precise criteria, is linked to either humanitarian or development assistance and is designed as part of wider programmes for rehabilitation and in order to ensure that they can be realized.

11. The States members of the European Union also have extensive bilateral programmes, involving the provision both of financial assistance and personnel, in operation in a number of countries, including Afghanistan, Cambodia, Mozambique and Nicaragua. These operations cover a variety of activities including training, mine clearance, research, mine-awareness programmes and collection and provision of information.

12. Major and successful examples of the type of training programmes implemented can be found in Cambodia and Mozambique in the context of the United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia/United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia and the United Nations Operation in Mozambique. There have also been substantial mine-awareness programmes affecting the civilian population in, for example, Nicaragua and Nagorny Karabakh. Communications equipment has been provided to mine-clearing personnel in Nicaragua, and databases have been opened for assistance to de-mining personnel in a number of programmes.

13. There has, up to now, been little international cooperation on the broad issue of tackling the vast and global land-mine problem. Cooperation has tended to be country or project-based. A greater overall perspective of this problem is therefore needed in order to establish priorities for international action and to provide for the increased coordination of the activities of all parties involved in mine-clearance efforts. In particular, better coordination of the efforts undertaken by States as well as by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the various United Nations agencies, such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), is paramount.

14. The European Union stresses the importance of coordination by the United Nations of activities related to mine clearance. In this context the European Union welcomes the appointment by the Secretary-General of the United Nations de-mining expert with an overall coordinating role between the Departments of Humanitarian Affairs and Peace-keeping Operations. The de-mining expert should serve as the source of policy advice for all departments at United Nations Headquarters. He should also facilitate cooperation on this key issue throughout the United Nations system through, in particular, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs which should have primary responsibility for coordinating mine-clearing activities not directly related to the operational needs of a peace-keeping operation.

15. The experience of members of the European Union has also shown that mine-clearance operations have sometimes been hindered by the lack of a memorandum of understanding between the member States providing the de-mining assistance and the United Nations organization administering the operation. For instance, there have been differences, inter alia, about the status of the member States' technical advisers and about the compensation with respect to illness, disability or death, incurred in the course of the mine-clearing mission. In order for mine-clearance operations to proceed more effectively in the future, such issues should be resolved well in advance. As it is fair to expect that mine-clearance activities will be expanding in the future, the drafting of general rules of procedures and standard memoranda of understanding would greatly assist in the more rapid start-up of such activities.

16. The European Union is prepared to envisage training in mine-clearance techniques as being provided as part of a peace-keeping operation, as in UNTAC. But the actual process of mine clearance (other than for the immediate operational needs of a peace-keeping operation) should be carried out by and under the auspices of host Governments. Priority should accordingly be given to the training of local de-miners and to the development by host Governments of effective methods of educating local populations of the dangers of mines and how to avoid mines and other unexploded devices.

17. To ensure the effective management of mine-clearance activities, host Governments might create or should be assisted in creating an overall framework to draw in relevant United Nations agencies and bilateral donors, as well as the appropriate technical experts or teams of experts, including non-governmental organizations. It is particularly important that in preparing consolidated appeals the Department of Humanitarian Affairs should include provision for de-mining. Sometimes, in the context of the movement of a large number of refugees or displaced persons, it could logically fall to one of the appropriate United Nations agencies to provide the relevant framework for implementing partners to carry out mine clearance.

18. In addition, the European Union believes that it would be helpful if the Department of Humanitarian Affairs was equipped to establish a central database related to mine clearance at United Nations Headquarters. This database might include:

(a) All readily available information on the location of laid land-mines and their types;

(b) Information on the results of the latest research in the field of improved mine-detection and mine-clearance techniques;

(c) Information on past and present mine-clearance operations and facilities, including manpower, sources of supply, costs and so on.

19. The European Union is considering favourably the proposal to establish a United Nations voluntary trust fund to assist especially in information and training programmes relating to mine clearance and to facilitate the launching of mine-clearance operations. This would be in particular to cover the phase between training supervisors and managers and funding for mine-clearance programmes through a consolidated appeal or well-targeted bilateral programme.

20. In that context, the European Union asks the Secretary-General for his views on the size and management of the fund. This would depend on the financial need for coordination in the fields of information and training as well as to facilitate the launching of mine-clearance programmes (see para. 5 of resolution 48/7).

IRAQ

[Original: Arabic]

[7 June 1994]

1. The military aggression launched by the coalition forces against Iraq left behind a large number of unexploded bombs, missiles, shells and mines. Since the beginning of 1992, the United Nations has been notified periodically of the numbers of explosives found by civil defence teams and deactivated, as well as statistics of the numbers of the deaths of innocent civilians and the material losses caused by these unexploded bombs and devices, which are scattered over all parts of Iraq.

2. The number of bombs, shells, mines and missiles of various types found and deactivated by the year's end was 263,938. These explosives caused the deaths of 112 innocent civilians, including children, and wounded 154 persons. At the same time, the casualties among the ranks of the disposal teams carrying out the deactivation of these explosives totalled 19 dead and 14 wounded.

3. These figures show the extent of the danger threatening the lives of innocent civilians in Iraq, in addition to the threats to which they are exposed as result of a lack of food and medicines and the deterioration of the health situation because of the iniquitous embargo imposed on Iraq, which prevents the Iraqi people from fulfilling the most elementary fundamental human needs.

ISRAEL

[Original: English]

[3 August 1994]

1. Israel would like to offer its know-how, assistance and training in mine clearance.

2. In addition, Israel is willing to cooperate with interested parties on research and development of mine-clearance equipment, as well as offering to sell indigenously mine-clearance equipment.

3. Israel would like to draw attention to the fact that in addressing world wide an effort to reduce the damage caused by anti-personnel land-mines, the Israeli Government has decided upon a moratorium of two years on the transfer of anti-personnel land-mines. During this period, Israel will be working with other interested parties to review the establishment of a permanent regime for banning the transfer of anti-personnel land-mines.

JORDAN

[Original: Arabic]

[17 August 1994]

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Mines were already being used in warfare prior to the First World War. They were used in different ways with the aim of exerting a material and "moral" impact on the enemy forces, inflicting the greatest possible losses and obstructing their progress for as long as possible.

2. The world is at present seeking to avoid all forms of mine-based warfare and to alleviate the damage that mines cause, particularly to human beings in the form of suffering, maiming and death, in addition to their destructive economic impact. To that end, the United Nations General Assembly, on 19 October 1993, adopted resolution 48/7 entitled "Assistance in mine clearance", urging Member States to cooperate in a general way with the Secretary-General of the United Nations in that area.

3. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is one of the countries worst affected by the problem of mines on its borders with neighbouring countries. They have constituted an enormous economic burden and they have also affected development plans, particularly in the Jordan Valley and on the northern front. The clearance of these mines will place a further burden on Jordan in a number of areas.

II. OBJECT

4. A study of minefield clearance operations in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, specifically on the cease-fire line, and of the present and future problems and consequences that may be expected to ensue.

5. A statement of the cost of financing the requisite operations and of the cost of clearance materials.

6. Publishing of Jordanian experience and presentation of corresponding recommendations that may be of benefit internationally, drawing attention to the options available in the field.

III. FACTS OF THE PROBLEM

7. Engineering capability. Four engineering battalions attached to the divisions. The Royal Seventh Armoured Engineering Battalion.

8. Various quantities and types of mines were laid, including plastic and metal varieties.

9. A total of 286,330 different mines were laid, of which 80,137 have been cleared since 1967, leaving a total of 206,193.

10. Length of time since the mines were laid. Most of the mines were laid between 20 and 30 years ago with the following results:

(a) Displacement of some of the mines from their original position as a result of weather conditions or the nature of the terrain in some places;

(b) Soil accumulation and flooding, which has created problems in using traditional methods of clearance;

(c) Increased sensitivity of mines owing to deterioration of the casing from exposure and interaction with the surrounding soil;

(d) Unreported explosions of a large number of mines owing to a variety of factors, making it difficult to count the number of missing mines following clearance;

(e) The difficulty of giving full assurances of safety to local people who wish to exploit their land, thus laying up problems for the future.

11. It follows from the foregoing that the casualty rate will be relatively greater during the clearance exercise when only traditional methods are used.

12. The cost in terms of mine-laying, mine destruction, the effort expended and the expected human casualties is a major financial burden that cannot be overlooked.

IV. ASSUMPTIONS

13. Participation by all division engineering battalions in the clearance operations, with each battalion providing four task forces, consisting in each case of 2 officers and 10 other ranks, which can relieve each other during different periods of duty of the same battalion. This gives a total of 16 task forces.

14. Provision of 2 task forces by the Royal Seventh Armoured Engineering Battalion of the army corps of engineers, bringing the total to 18.

15. Central control of all task forces and their positions by the Royal Corps of Engineers Command.

16. On the basis of experience and reports of casualties, the approximate ratio is one casualty per 1,000 mines cleared, with the following pattern of distribution of the casualties (data from a study of the number of casualties and of mines cleared from 1970 to 1994):

(a) Fatalities: 13.25 per cent;

(b) Loss of a limb: 45.78 per cent;

(c) Loss of sight: 8.2 per cent;

(d) Loss of hearing: 4 per cent;

(e) Miscellaneous injuries (serious and moderate): 28.77 per cent.

17. For the purpose of estimating the financial cost of mines, the prices of M-19 anti-tank mines and M-14 anti-personnel mines were taken as the basis for the study, that is to say US$ 90 for an anti-tank mine and US$ 30 for an anti-personnel mine.

18. Cost of angle irons and barbed wire for standard fencing.

19. The amount of explosives needed to destroy the mines was estimated on the basis of one pound for every five mines plus a regular No. 27 detonator and a two-foot delayed-reaction fuse (destroying all anti-tank mines in their positions and crushing anti-personnel mines).

20. Individual costs based on the cost to the armed forces covering food, clothing and pay.

21. The cost of medical evacuation by air on the basis of $2,000 per flight.

22. The cost of hospital treatment estimated on the basis of hypothetical casualty ratios and the cost of each injury.

23. Administrative items required for the task forces aside from food and drink, calculated on the basis of one dinar per day for every three persons.

V. PRESENT SITUATION OF THE MINEFIELDS

24. A total of 490 minefields containing 286,330 miscellaneous mines were laid. Of these, 154 fields containing 80,137 miscellaneous mines have been cleared since 1967.

25. There are now 336 minefields containing 206,193 mines, of which 140,940 are anti-personnel mines and 65,253 anti-tank mines, dispersed along the frontiers of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan with neighbouring countries, mostly on the front with Israel.

VI. CLEARANCE METHODS

26. It has been established that manual clearance is the best method of dealing with minefields. In spite of the time factor and the risk of casualties, the safety ratio is very high, especially in fields recently laid in a methodical way.

27. Given the characteristics of the minefields and in view of the foregoing, a proposed approach was adopted and proved successful in practice, leading to a reduction in the casualty ratio. It may be summarized as follows:

(a) Conduct of a survey of the field, showing the configuration and the median line of the zone;

(b) Removal of the central mine in each mixed group (anti-tank mine) and any anti-personnel mine that is visible;

(c) Compilation of a list of all missing anti-tank mines, checking them against the records and returning for a second manual inspection;

(d) Use of a minesweeper in the areas containing missing anti-tank mines;

(e) Use of the minesweeper throughout the zones to destroy anti-personnel mines;

(f) Use of an assault tank throughout the field, following the pattern in which the mines were laid, so that the tracks produce an overlap effect in line with the pattern;

(g) Use of the blades of a mine-clearing plough, penetrating to the greatest possible depth, to plough the area of the minefield.

28. It is possible to use minesweepers in mine-clearance operations from the outset, but this is costly in material terms since the minesweeper is accident-prone in all circumstances and its use must be followed by a manual inspection.

29. It is possible to use explosives in mine clearance but this approach calls for explosive operations on a massive scale and advanced equipment that is not suited to minefields.

VII. THE PROPOSED PROCEDURE, THE TASK FORCES AND THE TIME REQUIRED FOR CLEARANCE

30. The proposed procedure for mine clearance in the future is that currently followed, a combination of manual and mechanical operations.

31. Work is conducted with 12 task forces a day, keeping 6 in reserve. Each task force works for four hours a day in view of the weather conditions and nervous tension.

32. Each task force can clear 30 different mines a day, so that a total of 360 mines can be cleared daily.

33. The total number of days required by the task forces is 206,193 ÷ 360 = 573 working days.

34. Twenty per cent of the time calculated is required for the use of minesweepers and mine-clearing ploughs with a reserve margin = 115 working days.

35. Expected grand total of working days: 115 + 573 = 688 working days (almost three years).

VIII. ESTIMATED FINANCIAL COST

36. Cost of the mines laid and of the explosive accessories required to destroy them

(a)	Anti-tank mines:	65,253 x 90 = $5,872,770
(b)	Anti-personnel mines:	140,940 x 30 = $4,228,200
(c)	S-4 paste:	(206,193 ÷ 5) x 7 = $288,670
(d)	Regular detonator:	41,240 x 2.1 = $86,604
(e)	Delayed-action fuse (by the foot):	82,480 x 0.33 = $27,494
(f)	Explosive substance (one ounce):	41,240 x 0.25 = $10,310
(g)	Total:	$10,514,048

37. Cost of human resources

(a) Total cost per private: pay, medical care, transport and heating, bed, mattress, pillow = 6.92 Jordanian dinars per day;

(b) Daily cost of an officer: JD 11.21;

(c) Total number of privates participating in the operation: 310 privates (engineering, medical services, communications, administrative services, drivers);

(d) Total number of officers participating in the operation: 52 officers (engineering, medical services);

(e) Cost of privates for the full number of working days anticipated: 688 x 6.92 x 310 = JD 1,475,897 (equivalent to $2,108,425);

(f) Cost of officers for the full number of working days anticipated: 52 x 11.21 x 688 = JD 401,049 (equivalent to $572,927);

(g) Total cost of privates and officers: $572,927 + $2,108,425 = $2,681,352.

38. Cost of medical evacuation by air: it has been calculated that a single evacuation exercise costs $2,000. The expected number of casualties on the basis of previous averages is 206,193 ÷ 1,000 = approximately 206 casualties, of which 75 per cent need to be evacuated by air, that is to say 155. The cost is therefore 155 x $2,000 = $310,000.

39. Cost of fencing

(a)	Straight wire (by the reel):	45,000 x 18.57 = $83,565
(b)	Long six-foot angle iron:	80,000 x 5.36 = $428,800

(c) Short three-foot angle iron: 30,000 x 3.57 = $107,100

(d) Coiled wire (by the reel): 500 x 107.2 = $53,600

(e) Total cost of fencing: $1,425,150

40. Cost of recreation: estimated to average one dinar a day for every three privates = (362 + 3) x 688 = JD 83,019 (equivalent to $118,599).

41. Cost of machinery: (including mine-clearing ploughs, minesweepers, Landrovers and trucks) calculated on the basis of the cost of the machinery per working day, as follows:

(a) Mine-clearing plough: cost per working day = JD 110; total cost = 100 x 115 = 12,650 x 6 = JD 75,900 (equivalent to $108,429);

(b) Minesweeper: cost per working day = JD 100; total cost = (100 x 115) x 6 = JD 69,000 (equivalent to $98,572);

(c) Landrover: (35 x 4) x 688 = JD 96,320 (equivalent to $137,600);

(d) 2.5 ton truck: (18 x 8) x 688 = JD 99,072 (equivalent to $141,532);

(e) Total cost of machinery: $108,429 + $98,572 + $137,600 + $141,532 = $486,133.

42. Grand total: $10,514,048 + $2,681,352 + $310,000 + $1,425,150 + $118,599 + $486,133 = $15,535,282 (an average of roughly $75 per mine laid), excluding the cost of expertise and payroll units.

IX. PROBLEMS STEMMING FROM MINE CLEARANCE

43. Engineering problems

(a) Commitment of most of the engineering capability to clearance operations for a very long period;

(b) Increased casualty ratio among privates;

(c) Depreciation of most of the engineering corps machinery owing to constant use and the possibility of accidents;

(d) The difficulty of ensuring a 100 per cent safety ratio, so that problems will arise with the local population in the future;

(e) The impact on the training plans of participating units;

(f) The high cost of clearance operations, especially if account is taken of compensation and early retirement resulting from casualties.

44. Security and mobilization problems: the mine-clearance operation will affect defence and security plans, requiring total reliance on the human factor in security and defence activities, taking into account the length of Jordan's frontiers with neighbouring countries and the limited human resources available.

X. JORDANIAN EXPERTISE AND POSSIBLE PARTICIPATION IN THE INTERNATIONAL ENDEAVOUR

45. The Jordanian armed forces have acquired considerable expertise in dealing with minefields, scattered mines and other explosive devices through their continuous work in the area for some 40 years or more.

46. Jordanian expertise may be shared at the international level in one of the following ways:

(a) Participation in the training of United Nations forces in areas laid with mines;

(b) Practical participation in task forces actually involved in mine clearance in the United Nations forces, with coordinated prior training of the task forces concerned on mines present in possible areas of operation;

(c) The engineering capability that could be made available without affecting the standard support that our units require amounts to five task forces, each composed of two officers and 10 other ranks;

(d) Practical experience has shown that the best way of dealing with mines is as follows:

(i) Manually, when dealing with minefields laid in a regular way;

(ii) Use of minesweepers and mine-clearing ploughs for clearing fields of scattered or randomly laid mines.

LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA

[Original: Arabic]

[15 September 1994]

1. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya wishes to reiterate that it welcomes resolution 48/7 adopted by the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session concerning the clearance of mines resulting from armed conflicts. It supports the steps called for by the resolution and regards it as a basis for ongoing and developing action to enable the international community to be rid of mines and other unexploded devices whose presence causes serious humanitarian, social, economic and ecological distraction.

2. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya is one of those States still facing this grave problem. It first encountered it with the outbreak of the Second World War,

when its territory became a major theatre of war. It had to endure a number of grim military operations engaged in by the Axis forces and the Allied forces. The military operations included intensive laying of mines and booby traps of various kinds in vast areas of its territory, coastal areas and territorial waters. When the Second World War ended and the combatants departed from the territory of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, they left behind them vast areas laid with mines and booby traps, without clearing them or assisting in the clearance or providing maps indicating the location. The situation was aggravated by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya's lack of the necessary technical expertise for clearance operations.

3. One result of this singular situation was that the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was affected with tremendous losses of lives and property, as well as obstruction of its development plans and an increase in the cost of its programme. It is not easy to make accurate and final assessments, but a preliminary study prepared by Libyan experts has estimated the losses in lives and property over a specific period as follows:

(a) Losses of lives

(i)	Deaths, 1940-1952	3,780
(ii)	Deaths, 1952-1975	1,890
(iii)	Permanently disabling injuries, 1940-1952	3,290
(iv)	Permanently disabling injuries, 1952-1975	1,645

These figures include men, women and children.

(b) Losses of property

(i) Animal husbandry sector (result of minefields in traditional areas)

a.	Camels	75,000
b.	Sheep	36,250
c.	Goats	12,500
d.	Cattle	1,250

The total value of the losses in the animal husbandry sector are estimated at approximately 30 million Libyan dinars (LD) at 1981 prices.

(ii) Petroleum sector, 1952-1972

a.	Shock line [?] clearance operations	LD 18,168,500
b.	Expenses of the oil fields department	LD 7,560,000
c.	Hazard pay for personnel	LD 21,526,000
	Total	LD 47,254,500

(iii) Agricultural sector

a.	Expenses of clearing certain areas	LD 161,137,500
b.	Non-exploitation of agricultural grain land	LD 511,472,110
c.	Damage to wells and pastureland	LD 750,000
d.	Damage resulting from delays in development plans	LD 325,000,000
	Total	LD 998,359,610

(iv) Industrial sector

It was not possible to estimate the damage resulting from stoppage of minerals exploration because of the presence of mines.

(v) Communication sector

Roads and ports LD 2,500,000,000

(vi) Expenses of the Explosives Section of the Department of Justice

1954-1972 LD 2,042,221

4. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has made unparalleled efforts, within the limits of its capabilities and possibilities, but it has been unable so far to get rid of the minefields laid in its territory, because of the extensiveness of the areas concerned, the variety of mine types and the absence of maps and documents indicating their location, as well as the lack of the necessary expertise to cope with this vast problem. These minefields still constitute a hazard, despite the lapse of time. Even now there are incidents of land-mines exploding, and from time to time sea-mines are found. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has sought to have the belligerent parties that laid these mines furnish maps and documents indicating their location, but these efforts have been unproductive, though in a few cases of limited effect.

5. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has seen fit to draw the attention of the international community to this problem, which has been brought before the General Assembly previously. We have submitted the issue to the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the Organization of

African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations General Assembly. The General Assembly has considered it and has adopted a number of resolutions on the subject, and the Secretary-General submitted a report on the material remnants of war and their effect on the environment pursuant to General Assembly resolution 3435 (XXX).

6. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has made fine efforts in preparing the reports and study requested of it by the General Assembly. There was great hope that the United Nations efforts would continue, but they halted because of lack of data, although fresh hope has arisen with the adoption of General Assembly resolution 48/7.

7. In this context, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has organized a number of symposia at home and abroad, including the one organized in conjunction with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) at Geneva from 28 April to 1 May 1981, and the conclusions of this symposium could be utilized.

8. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya would like to affirm the following:

(a) The importance of the role that the United Nations can play in contributing to the coordination of activities relating to mine-clearance operations, particularly activities relating to information and training aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of field operations; and also the importance of drawing on previous efforts of United Nations bodies, in particular UNEP and UNITAR;

(b) The parties that laid the mines must fulfil their obligations; it is vital that they cooperate by furnishing maps and documents indicating the location of minefields and by providing the necessary technical assistance for clearance operations.

9. In conclusion, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya wishes to point out that the Agreement that it signed with the Republic of Chad on 4 April 1994 concerning the practical modalities for the implementation of the Judgment delivered by the International Court of Justice concerning the territorial dispute between them contains, in article 2, provisions relating to mine clearance.

10. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya will continue to make every effort to cooperate with the United Nations towards arrival at an effective solution to this grave problem.

MEXICO

[Original: Spanish]

[6 June 1994]

1. For the Government of Mexico it is important to stress the definitive solution to the problem of the presence of mines and other unexploded devices in various parts of the world is a complete prohibition of the production, storage,

export and proliferation of this kind of inhuman weapon, an objective towards which the efforts of the international community must be directed.

2. It is thus appropriate to make an urgent appeal to those States which have not yet done so to become parties as early as possible to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, and to its protocols.

3. The provisions on the use, emplacement and clearance of mines contained in Protocol II to the 1980 Convention must be respected and observed under all circumstances.

4. With regard to the clearance of mines, the coordination of mine clearance activities, including those carried out by regional agencies in accordance with their mandates, must devolve upon the United Nations in order to improve the effectiveness of operations in the field.

5. It would be advisable for the budgets of peace-keeping operations deployed in conflict zones where there is prior knowledge of the presence of mines to include sufficient financial resources for their clearance.

6. In any event, mine clearance operations, whether conducted by the United Nations through its peace-keeping operations or by other intergovernmental and non-governmental bodies, should be carried out at the request of the State concerned.

7. The Government of Mexico is of the view that the trust fund for mine clearance activities must be constituted by voluntary contributions only and that the resources available from the fund must be assigned in support of activities by Governments and other bodies involved in mine clearance operations.

NICARAGUA

[Original: Spanish]

[22 July 1994]

TERRAIN

I. General

Much of Nicaragua's terrain is mountainous with fairly rugged relief. There are also flat areas which are subject to flooding, as well as valleys experiencing periodic floods. Most of the minefields were laid in rugged and undulating terrain at altitudes of between 800 and 1,500 metres above sealevel. Some fields were laid in areas subject to flooding, and as a result there has been some movement of an undetermined number of mines; there has also been some movement as a result of landslides and erosion.

There is rainfall for nearly nine months of the year in the mountainous sectors and the climate is harsh and wet.

The vegetation is lush and tropical.

The country does not experience seasons, but there are rainy and dry periods, which influences the climate, but the real determinant of ambient temperature is altitude above sealevel, that is the thermal level at each location.

II. Characteristics of mined areas

1. Northern border sector

1.1 Area between Palo Grande (87° 01' 15") and San Pedro del Norte (86° 52' 55")

Relief: Sector has flat topography with irregular elevations of 100 to 1,500 metres above sealevel.

Vegetation: Sparse, with widespread calabash, a typical dry area growth; the vegetation changes in the San Pedro del Norte sector, where there is a predominance of pine.

Climate: Dry, generally low rainfall, the most important river being the Guasaule, which forms the border with Honduras.

Road network: The principal road is the highway between Chinandega-Somotillo-Cinco Pinos and San Rafael del Norte.

1.2 Area between San Pedro del Norte (87° 01' 15") and Wamblan (85° 44' 55")

Relief: The area is characterized by elevations of 300 to 2,100 metres above sealevel, with flat zones in the Dipilto valley, Jalapa and Santa María, where tobacco, vegetables, maize, beans and rice are cultivated. The area is drained by various small rivers, including the Poteca, the Dipilto and the Macuelizo.

Vegetation: Dense coverage with pine, oak, fir and other valuable timber.

Climate: Wet, rainfall almost all year round, with temperatures reaching 18°C at higher elevations.

Road network: The Pan-American Highway extends to the Las Manos border post, with a branch road to Yalaguina and Ocotal, and a network of roads joining Ocotal with Jalapa and Teotecacinte.

2. Central sector (comprises Departments of Estelí, Jinotega and Matagalpa)

Relief: The region is essentially mountainous with altitudes in excess of 1,500 metres above sealevel, including the Peñas Blancas, Samaria, Kilambé and Chimborazo massifs. This sector contains the country's major rivers, including: Matagalpa, Bocay, Tuma and Coco. It also contains the Apanás reservoir, with an area of 51 square kilometres.

Vegetation: Wooded with oak and pine and other kinds of valuable timber, mixed with plots of grain crops and livestock pasture.

Climate: Extremely wet, with rainfall almost all year round. Vegetation is always green. Cool temperatures, reaching 18 to 20°C at higher elevations.

Road network: A stretch of the Pan-American Highway between Darío, Sébaco, Estelí, Matagalpa and Jinotega. There are also networks of all-weather highways as follows:

- Matagalpa-Matiguás-Río Blanco
- Matagalpa-Tuma-Waslala
- Jinotega-Pueblo Nuevo-Bocay-Ayapal
- Palacaguina-San Juan de Río Coco-Quilalí
- Jinotega-Waswalí
- Estelí-La Concordia-San Rafael del Norte-Yalí

3. Southern border sector

3.1 El Naranjo-Peñas Blancas-Los Chiles area (85° 41' 15") and San Juan del Norte (83° 41' 28")

Relief: The Peñas Blancas-El Naranjo sector is virtually flat, extending towards the Pacific Ocean with some elevations of 600 metres having gentle slopes of 10 to 30 per cent. The most important river is the Sapoá, with a number of tributaries from Lake Nicaragua.

Vegetation: From Peñas Blancas towards the east are savannah and forested areas, and towards the Pacific Ocean sparse woods and scrub with such vegetation as genízaro, conacaste and bombax.

Climate: Hot, with a single season and two periods, one dry and one rainy.

Road network: The principal highway is from Rivas to Peñas Blancas, with a branch to San Juan del Sur and all-weather roads linking El Naranjo, Sapoá and El Ostional.

3.2 Sapoá-Las Cañas region on the Costa Rican border

Relief: Mostly flat, with a few locations, such as Cerro El Diablo, Cerro Pescado and Cerro Tigra, between 300 and 600 metres above sealevel. Similar characteristics to the Peñas Blancas-El Naranjo sector.

Vegetation: Dense, semi-forested, abundant supplies of valuable timber, including one of the country's main forest reserves. Also cattle raising and cultivation of traditional crops.

Climate: Humid with heavy rainfall.

Road network: Undeveloped; all-weather roads provide links to Acoyapa, Morrito and San Carlos. One of the main communication links is the San Juan river which marks the border with Costa Rica.

III. Other considerations

(a) Characteristics of the mines

The mines laid both in Nicaraguan territory and in areas along the borders with Costa Rica and Honduras have the following technical characteristics:

General technical data

Type of mine	Origin	Type of fuse
MAT PTMI-K	Czechoslovakia	RO-5 and Activ. RO-3
MAP PPMI-SR-11	Czechoslovakia	RO-8, MUV-2, EM-1
MAP PMN	USSR	MD-9 detonator
MAP PMN-2	USSR	Integrated detonator
MAP M/969	Portugal (of Belgian manufacture)	Integrated detonator

During the military conflict in Nicaragua, the following quantities of mines were laid:

Existence and location of minefields

No.	Locality	Minefields (km)	Number of targets	No. of mines
1.	In the interior	45.3	318	55 049
2.	Northern border	145	425	55 957
3.	Southern border	15	98	4 845
	Total	205.3	839	115 851

IV. Mine-clearance programme in Nicaragua

The Nicaraguan Government, with the assistance of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB), launched in April 1993, pursuant to the agreements signed on 31 March 1993 in Washington, D.C., a Plan for the Removal of Mines in the National Territory. The same Plan provides for the training of up to five platoons of sappers who would be responsible for the clearance and destruction of minefields and for the execution phase of the operations.

The execution phase of the mine-clearing operations included the destruction of mines planted in the following target localities:

General list of targets to be cleared

No.	Type of targets	Military units								Number of mines		
		1 MRC	2 MRC	4 MRC	5 MRC	6 MRC	MMD	EPS N.P.	Total	Pressure	Fragm.	Total
1.	High-tension towers	97			105	92			294	13 300		13 300
2.	Energy plants (electrical substation)				1	3			4	5 707		5 707
3.	Human settlements, villages and cooperatives					6			6	11 872	604	12 476
4.	Bridges					3			3	1 206		1 206
5.	Antenna fields and high-tension towers				1	1			2	2 151		2 151
6.	Warehouses							1	1	2 957		2 957
	Total	97			107	105		1	310	37 193	604	37 797

This phase of execution was expected to be completed in approximately two years.

As part of these operations and with the assistance of OAS/IADB, mines in the following target localities were successfully removed and destroyed:

Status of mine-clearing operations supervised by IADB

No.	Targets cleared	Mines destroyed	Area cleared, m^2
1	60	2 375	27 649

Because of financial constraints, the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Defense Board were forced to withdraw their staff and to terminate the programme of assistance for the removal and destruction of mines in Nicaragua on 15 November 1993.

In a supreme effort to attain the objectives of the Plan for Removal of Mines in the National Territory (Stage 1), the Army continued its operations without the benefit of technical or financial assistance and achieved the following results during this period:

Results of mine-clearance operations by the EPS since the withdrawal of IADB

No.	Targets cleared	Mines destroyed	Area cleared, m^2
1	68	4 139	35 193

Final results of mine-clearance operations over seven months

No.	Targets cleared	Mines destroyed	Area cleared, m^2
1	128	6 514	62 847

Eight accidents occurred during these operations, resulting in two deaths and six injuries.

These operations were suspended by the Army, which could not fund them from its own resources and received no extrabudgetary funding for them.

After seven months of operations, the situation as regards remaining mines is as follows:

Existence and location of minefields

No.	Target locality	Minefields	Number of targets	Number of mines
1.	In the interior		190	48 535
2.	Northern border	145	425	55 957
3.	Southern border	15	98	4 845
	Total	160	711	109 337

The following targets were cleared of mines:

(a) MRC 1: 55 high-tension towers in the national electricity grid
1 settlement (village)
1 antenna field

(b) MRC 5: 24 high-tension towers in the national electricity grid

(c) MRC 6: 46 high-tension towers in the national electricity grid
1 hydro-electric plant (partially cleared)

128 targets cleared

SUPPLIES REQUIRED FOR MINE-CLEARANCE OPERATIONS WHICH EPS DOES NOT HAVE IN ITS INVENTORY (TAKING AS A NORM ONE SAPPER PLATOON) a/

No.	Description	Unit of measurement	Quantity required	Total	Remarks
I.	Field equipment				
1.	Tents				
	(a) T-5	Each	1		
	(b) T-10	Each	4		
	(c) T-20	Each	1		
II.	Communications equipment				
2.	Walkie talkie	Each	4		With storage battery and individual chargers.
III.	Technical equipment				
3.	Explosive	Kg	100		TNT.
4.	Detonating cord	Metres	1 000		The amounts are calculated for one month of work per platoon.
5.	Electrical detonators	Each	50		
6.	Explosive detonators	Each	50		

/...

No.	Description	Unit of measurement	Quantity required	Total	Remarks
7.	Mechanical igniters	Each	50		
8.	Safety fuse	Metres	200		
V.	Special equipment				
9.	Detectors	Each	5		AN/PSS-12.
10.	Protective goggles	Each	20		Protective optics.
11.	Protective suits	Each	5		Anti-suction wave jackets.
VI.	Other				
12.	Pay	Córdobas	25 000	25 000	Per platoon (monthly).
13.	Life insurance				Depending on the injury suffered. The amount is determined by the insurance company.
14.	Cold rations	Each	272		

a/ For information: seven months of operations by EPS with five platoons at a cost of C$ 2,346,867, excluding explosives and detonators.

Conclusions

1. To constitute the Special Mine-clearing Unit (UED), five sapper platoons were formed and trained consisting of 22 specialists in each team and 12 support personnel of whom between 50 and 60 per cent belonged to the main units of the army (career soldiers) and the other 40 to 50 per cent were contractual.

After the termination of the plan, for the reasons already given, the UED was reduced to three sapper platoons equipped to carry out mine-clearance missions; the platoons consisted entirely of career soldiers who had participated in the mine-clearance operations. Each platoon consisted of 23 men (one team leader, three squads of seven sappers and one driver) structured permanently as a reserve unit of the high command.

2. The mine removal operations provided significant experience for the small units which participated in this plan.

3. If the national mine-clearance plan is continued, with international assistance, the possibility of using mechanical means of mine clearance must be considered, since there are flat mined areas where this would be possible, thus reducing the risk of accidents. Similarly, the option should be left open of acquiring, through donations or aid, individual suits which would give better protection than those we have now.

4. With the experience of seven months of operations, it has been determined that the best time of year for carrying out mine-clearance operations is during the dry months (five months, from January to May).

5. The method of removing mines (detection and destruction) has been changed in order to reduce the percentage of casualties resulting from accidents, to the extent that during the first four months of work there was a 12 per cent casualty rate among all the sappers involved in the mine-clearance work, but by the time the operations were stopped, the rate had fallen to 2 per cent of the total number of sappers.

6. EPS has an approximate register of some 75 per cent of the minefields which are proposed for destruction.

7. In order to continue the programme of assistance in mine removal, stable financing is essential; that will enable us to provide pay for the personnel and life insurance in case of accidents, purchase blasting agents, priming agents and fuel, and provide protection with special protection equipment and means of detecting mines which may cause casualties, both as a result of accidents and in the course of clearance.

Inventory of technical equipment supplied by the Inter-American Defense Board to the Ejército Popular Sandinista

No.	Description	Total
1	Standard pliers	15
2	6 volt Yuasa battery	4
3	Bag to carry explosives	15
4	Red flags to indicate danger	10
5	Helmets	130
6	DR-8 reel	15
7	Tape to indicate danger, 1,000 feet with harness	48
8	White marking tape, 500 feet	9
9	Metric tape, 100 feet	15
10	Metric tape, 6 feet	15
11	Fluorescent cones, red	160
12	Trowels (small)	10
13	Trowels (large)	5
14	Trowels (large)	30
15	Nylon cord (1,200 ft. roll)	5
16	Camp-beds	10
17	Metallic reel with 500 feet of cable	12
18	Grey anti-suction wave jackets	20
19	Bullet-proof jackets	115
20	Mine detector (set mine PSS)	20
21	Plastic case for 10 non-electric primers	30
22	M-34 blaster	15
23	Honda generators	4
24	Grappling hook	4
25	Axes with wooden hafts	10
26	Screwdriver set (6 pieces)	5

No.	Description	Total
27	Battery kit	4
28	Protective goggles (protective optics)	29
29	Machetes	10
30	Handles for DR-8 reel	15
31	Poles for danger flags	17
32	Mine markers	510
33	Swiss Victorinox knives	30
34	Circuit tester (Test set Blasting)	15
35	Pairs of anti-mine boots	23
36	Spades with wide wooden handles	18
37	Protective anti-mine trousers	20
38	Leaf blower (Husquarna 140P)	15
39	Triangular sheet-metal signs	60
40	Pliers to cut wire or sheet metal	15
41	Tent	5

Current stock of special mine-clearance equipment

No.	Description	Unit of measurement	Quantity
I	Special protective equipment		
1	Anti-suction wave jacket	Each	18
2	Leg coverings	Each	18
3	Protective shoes	Pairs	20
4	Protective goggles	Pairs	10
5	Bullet-proof jackets	Each	106
6	Bullet-proof helmets	Each	126
II	Technical supplies		
1	Mine detectors	Each	13
2	Exploders	Each	11
3	Circuit testers	Each	12
6	Bag for person carrying explosives	Each	14
7	Metal helmets	Each	145
8	Signal cones	Each	85
9	Yellow tape	Roll	21
10	Metric tape (100 feet)	Each	8
11	Reel with cable	Each	9
15	Anchors	Each	13
16	White tape	Roll	5
17	Single strand wire	Roll	12
	Leaf blowers	Each	15
	Honda generators	Each	4

No.	Description	Unit of measurement	Quantity
III	Tools		
2	Shovels	Each	18
3	Machetes	Each	10
8	Axes	Each	10
10	Wire cutters	Each	12
12	Trowels	Each	11
13	Red flags	Each	7
IV	Field equipment		
1	USA tent	Each	3
12	Medical pack	Each	5

NORWAY

[Original: English]

[1 July 1994]

1. The Government of Norway is gravely concerned by the increasing use of anti-personnel land-mines in conflict areas. The primary victims of land-mines are unarmed civilians. Children are particularly affected. Land-mines also have a devastating impact on societies at large by making entire areas of land inaccessible for decades, preventing refugees and internally displaced persons from returning home and hindering development and rehabilitation.

2. The Government of Norway has made considerable contributions to de-mining activities in war-ridden areas. Since 1989, the Government has, as part of its humanitarian assistance, made a total contribution of NKr 96 million ($14 million) to de-mining operations in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Mozambique, Angola, Eritrea, Somalia and northern Iraq.

3. The funds are channelled through the United Nations system in support of United Nations operations, such as the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Assistance to Afghanistan, and Norwegian non-governmental organizations, such as the Norwegian People's Aid (NPA). The NPA de-mining operations are carried out in close cooperation with United Nations de-mining operations or as an integrated part of such operations. The NPA operations include humanitarian mine clearance, training of local de-miners and supervisors, mine-awareness programmes and general information on mines.

4. The Government of Norway welcomes the establishment, within the United Nations Secretariat, of a coordinated mine-clearance programme. This is an important first step in coordinating United Nations activities related to mine clearance.

5. To strengthen further the United Nations contribution to the solution of problems relating to mine clearance, the Government of Norway supports the proposal to establish a central database related to mine clearance within the mine-clearance unit.

6. The Government of Norway also considers favourably the proposal to establish a voluntary trust fund to finance information and training programmes relating to mine clearance and to facilitate the launching of mine-clearance operations.

SLOVENIA

[Original: English]

[6 June 1994]

1. Slovenia has been facing the problem of mines and other unexploded devices since the First World War: 8,000 kilograms of unexploded cannon grenades have been found yearly in the area of the Soca/isonzo front.

2. The number of unexploded mines and other devices from the Second World War and from the war for the independence of Slovenia (June-July 1991) is relatively smaller.

3. During the war in 1991, the Yugoslav army laid minefields around most of the military edifices, as well as in other areas of Slovenia. The unexploded devices were in larger part cleared in 1992 by the Slovene Civil Defence and the Slovene Army.

4. Safety measures with regard to mines and other unexploded devices in Slovenia have been implemented in the framework of the Civil Defence of the Republic of Slovenia. Eight units of the Civil Defence, consisting of 130 troops altogether, have been equipped for that purpose. Special emphasis is paid to the training and educating of the troops.

5. Considerable experience has been gained in the course of the operations for mine clearance. Fully aware of the importance of strengthening the international cooperation regarding mine-clearance activities, Slovenia continues to be interested in the exchange of experience with other Member States. Slovenia believes that it is important to strengthen the role of the United Nations in the efforts for effective mine clearance and is ready to cooperate in these efforts.

SRI LANKA

[Original: English]

[10 August 1994]

The Government of Sri Lanka supports the establishment of a trust fund to finance information and training programmes relating to mine clearance and to facilitate the launching of mine-clearance operations. The Government of Sri Lanka also shares the view that the fund should be endowed by means of contributions from mine-exporting countries and voluntary contributions by Member States.

SWEDEN

[Original: English]

[3 August 1994]

1. The presence of millions of land-mines, which predominantly affects the civilian population by causing death, injuries and the devastation of large areas of land, can never be tolerated. While the quantity of laid land-mines is ever increasing, mine clearance is conducted at an unacceptably low level.

2. Mine-clearance activities have to increase substantially but the problem must also be tackled in other ways. It is thus important to address the legality of the use of land-mines. The 1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects and its Protocol on land-mines must be strengthened and, in that context, the forthcoming Review Conference on the Convention is of utmost importance. An international ban on anti-personnel land-mines is the only real solution to the humanitarian problems caused by the use of these mines.

3. Not only States affected by the presence of land-mines but also the whole international community must be involved in restoring mined areas by rendering technical assistance, international funding of de-mining activities and strengthening of the coordination of mine-clearance activities.

4. Approximately $10 million has been allocated by the Government of Sweden to de-mining operations, mainly in Afghanistan, Cambodia and Mozambique. Sweden is prepared to continue to support de-mining activities by providing cash contributions to international programmes. A limited number of national experts can be engaged in de-mining operations, to give technical advice and training on de-mining activities.

5. Further research is essential, in order to develop new detection and clearance methods, which are needed for increasing the efficiency of de-mining. The Government of Sweden has recently decided to support the development of a mechanical de-mining vehicle, financed from the development cooperation budget. Continuous efforts are being made at the National Defence Research Establishment

(FOA) to develop technology for mine clearance. Research on mine clearance is an area that profits from international cooperation. The Swedish and German Ministries of Defence are jointly preparing a five-year programme in this field. This research is focusing on ground and air surveillance methods aiming at locating and clearing land-mines. In June this year, FOA hosted an international workshop of technical experts on ordnance recovery and disposal in the framework of international operations.

6. The importance of coordination of mine-clearance operations within the United Nations system has to be underlined and a United Nations focal point should be created. With the exception of mine-clearance operations in connection with peace-keeping operations, this duty should lie with the Department of Humanitarian Affairs at Headquarters. The de-mining expert, newly appointed by the Secretary-General, has an important task in giving advice on these matters.

7. Sweden would favour the establishment of a permanent supervisory body under the 1980 Conventional Weapons Convention and its Protocols as a whole. Such a body would consist of States parties to the Convention and should continuously keep the operation of the Convention under review and investigate alleged violations against the Convention and, in particular, its Protocol II.

8. A global database system, containing technical data on mines and other ordnance items relevant to de-mining operations would be of great value. Such a register could also contain information on mined areas and the laid mines, and also to what extent relevant areas have been cleared of mines. Sweden is prepared to supply such a database with the relevant information available in Sweden.

UKRAINE

[Original: English]

[8 June 1994]

1. The Government of Ukraine, being one of the co-sponsors of resolution 48/7 of 19 October 1993, entitled "Assistance in mine clearance", pays significant attention to this issue.

2. Since the Second World War and up to the present, Ukrainian soil contains a great number of exploded mines and shells, which still present real danger to the people.

3. Ukraine considers it appropriate in the framework of the United Nations system to create a coordinating centre capable of unifying the efforts of the regional organizations in mine clearance, especially in providing information regarding the characteristics of different types of mines and other explosives, the specifics of their deactivation in water and on land.

4. Each interested country might wish to consider the formation of special teams (units) with the view to fulfilling the tasks of deactivation of the

explosives on their territories, as well as on the territories of other countries in the framework of peace-making activities under the aegis of the United Nations.

5. The coordinating centre could provide assistance in gathering information regarding the development of new means of detection of the explosives and ways of their deactivation. It could also create a mechanism for using the above-mentioned special national de-mining units for the mine-clearing assignments on the territory of other countries at the request of the United Nations.

6. This mechanism should also provide the system of incentives and the social protection for the personnel.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

[Original: Arabic]

[4 May 1994]

1. Having considered General Assembly resolution 48/7, entitled "Assistance in mine clearance", the United Arab Emirates should like to state the following.

2. The United Arab Emirates agree that the resolution represents an encouraging initiative by the United Nations with a view to reducing the adverse consequences of the failure of certain parties to armed conflicts to abide by international law in the use of conventional and non-conventional weapons.

3. In recent times, and particularly during and following the Iran-Iraq war and the war for the liberation of Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates have thus been affected by the appearance, in large quantities, of naval mines in its territorial waters and close to the shores of the mainland and of the islands belonging to it.

4. The continued presence of naval mines and unexploded devices poses an increasing hazard to life, impedes the activities of companies operating in our territorial waters and on the islands and is a danger to international shipping.

5. In cooperation with the Border Guard and Coast Guard, the armed forces of the United Arab Emirates make great efforts to remove these mines and render them harmless in order to preserve lives and property and promote international shipping in the Arabian Gulf region.

6. The United Arab Emirates would support cooperation with the Organization in the implementation of the relevant programme through:

(a) The development and activation of a mechanism for monitoring international waters in the Gulf region in order to detect remnants of the Iran-Iraq war and the Gulf war such as mines and unexploded devices;

(b) The development and improvement of devices for the detection and detonation of mines;

(c) The organization, in coordination with the United Nations, of high-level training courses for those dealing with mines and unexploded devices in order to benefit from the experience of the industrialized countries in this field;

(d) The imposition of stricter penalties on States whose naval units commit such violations in international waters or in the territorial waters of a third State;

(e) The establishment by the United Nations of a timetable for assistance in the detection, identification and rendering harmless of mines and unexploded devices in the territorial waters and on the shores of the United Arab Emirates.

III. INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM BODIES WITH OBSERVER STATUS WITH THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

AGENCY FOR THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

[Original: English]

[29 April 1994]

The scope of the Treaty of Tlatelolco does not cover activities related to mine clearance in humanitarian, social and economic assistance activities, hence the Agency is unable to provide information on this subject.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

[Original: English]

[20 May 1994]

This matter has not been dealt with, either on the inter-governmental or the inter-parliamentary level of the Council of Europe.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

[Original: English]

[26 May 1994]

1. As a humanitarian organization whose primary task is to bring protection and assistance to victims of armed conflicts, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is also deeply concerned with the problem of mines. Its delegates and medical teams in the field are confronted with the magnitude of

the human suffering caused by these weapons, aggravated by the lack of sufficient medical expertise and infrastructure necessary for proper treatment and rehabilitation.

2. In order to examine the various aspects of the problem, namely, the legal, medical, social, economic and technical aspects, and to come up with viable proposals for remedial action, ICRC organized a symposium in Montreux (April 1993), whose report does address many of the issues mentioned in General Assembly resolution 48/7. Furthermore, ICRC organized a meeting of military experts on the utility of anti-personnel mines in Geneva (January 1994).

3. The results of that meeting, together with those of the Montreux symposium, have been incorporated in a comprehensive report that ICRC has submitted to the Group of Governmental Experts established by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to prepare the Review Conference of the 1980 Convention on Conventional Weapons. This report was issued by the United Nations Secretariat as a background document for the second session of the Group of Governmental Experts (CCW/CONF.I/GE/6 of 6 May 1994).

LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES

[Original: Arabic]

[5 June 1994]

1. The League received with great interest the letter of 23 March concerning the importance of coordination of activities by all organizations and bodies at the various levels in order to correct the extremely grave situation resulting from the existence of unexploded mines in many places that have been the scene of armed conflicts, inasmuch as such mines have caused and continue to cause the death or wounding of many innocent citizens (a well-known instance is the Rabta, Tobruk area, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya).

2. Desiring to promote cooperation between our organizations and the United Nations, particularly in the humanitarian, social, economic and development fields and related activities, and in appreciation of the United Nations unremitting effort in pursuing humanitarian activities, the League cannot but support the United Nations conception of the importance and urgency of coordination of the various activities affecting human development and well-being.

3. With regard to the establishment of a voluntary trust fund, which would constitute a fundamental step in dealing with the question of mine clearance, consideration of the financial aspects of the matter first requires the formulation of a concept for an integrated programme, which would be adopted, after study and discussion, by all concerned parties, particularly those whose territories were the subject of military action during the Second World War or have been the scene of other armed conflicts and which do not have plans and maps of the areas where unexploded mines are still present.

4. Since the expanded meetings on cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States include all the specialized agencies and specialized organizations of the two sides and their agendas cover all area of cooperation, in accordance with the General Assembly's resolution on cooperation, the League considers that it would be useful to prepare the appropriate file containing all the requisite data for submission to the expanded meeting next year.

ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES

[Original: English]

[16 May 1994]

1. Resolution AG/Res.1191 (XXII-0/92) asks the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States (OAS) to establish a fund to accept contributions and pledges from countries that wish to cooperate in mine-clearing operations in Central America. For its part, the Commission on Central American Security asked the Secretary-General to prepare a cooperation programme to clear Central American soil of the explosive devices sown in that region. Finally, as requested by the Foreign Ministers of Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala, the Secretary-General asked the Inter-American Defense Board to prepare national cooperation plans enabling him to comply with those requests.

2. The Mine-Clearance Assistance Programme began in Nicaragua with the clearance of more than 6,500 mines from the area surrounding the pylons of the Planta Centroamérica. Considering the terrain and other characteristics of the area in question, which caused considerable difficulty for the logistical support of the platoons working there, substantial headway was made in implementing the plan, with progress exceeding the targets. OAS reports CP/INF.3571/94 and Corr.1 and Add.1-4 give details of those activities and the funding thereof.

3. Preparations and procurement of material and military equipment to carry out the assistance plans in Honduras and Costa Rica were likewise initiated. The amount budgeted to implement those plans is $1,550,434.

4. The Government of the Republic of Suriname requested of the Secretary-General the assistance of the OAS Special Mission to certify the non-existence of mines and other explosive materials, or to clear and de-mine four main areas and other possible "grey areas" where mines and explosives were to be found. In 1994, with the cooperation of the Brazilian National Army, the Mission worked with the National Army of the Republic of Suriname to establish the Mine-Clearing Programme in that country.

Mine-Clearance Assistance Programme in Central America

5. At its twenty-second session, the General Assembly asked the Secretary-General to establish a Special Fund to accept contributions and pledges from those countries that wish to cooperate in mine-clearing operations in Central America (AG/Res.1191 (XXII-0/92)).

6. At the meeting of the Commission on Central American Security held in San Salvador, on 15 and 16 June 1992, the Secretary-General was asked to expand the Nicaraguan mine-removal programme to include the other Central American nations (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras). This decision was ratified by a request that was addressed to the Secretary-General by each nation's Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Secretary-General, in turn, sought the assistance of the Inter-American Defense Board in extending the mine-removal programme for Nicaragua to the rest of the Central American region pursuant to each country's own national planning. Such a programme would be implemented by each nation's army and, in the case of Costa Rica, specialized personnel.

7. Bearing in mind the request made by the Central American Governments for mine-clearing assistance, the concurrence of the Partnership for Democracy and Development in such a programme, the General Assembly resolution and the decision taken by the Commission on Central American Security, and taking into account as well the funding needs entailed in such assistance, in July 1992 the Secretary-General approached those member countries which might be in a position to cooperate in this area, as well as the observer countries of the Organization and members of the Partnership for Democracy and Development, to sound them out on the possibility of funding being made available to the Central American countries for the mine-clearing programme.

8. Affirmative responses were received from the Governments of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru and Uruguay, which offered to make officers from their armed forces available to direct and supervise the mine-clearing assistance operations in Nicaragua. The Governments of Guatemala and Honduras also made available officers from their armed forces.

9. Grant funds were given by the Governments of Germany, France, Japan, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and, especially, the United States. The Russian Federation provided special military equipment. The grant funds made it possible to assist the Sandinista People's Army to clear roughly 2,500 mines in the area surrounding the Central American Hydroelectric Plant and high-tension towers in the areas of Esteli, Jinotega and Sebaco. Detailed information on those operations is found in the report on the Mine-Clearance Assistance Programme in Nicaragua.

10. With regard to the Mine-Clearance Assistance Programme in Honduras, the Secretary-General forwarded the corresponding plan to its Government on 24 September 1993. In his subsequent response of 2 November 1993, the Minister for Foreign Affairs informed the Secretary General of his Government's approval of the plan. On 9 December 1993, the Secretary-General informed the Minister for Foreign Affairs that action had begun in order to secure financing for the subject activities.

11. The Mine-Clearance Plan for Honduras drawn up by the Inter-American Defense Board, which is keyed to the priorities set by the Government of Honduras, contains a technical description of operations that would be undertaken to assist in clearing explosive devices, as well as a programme budget.

12. The steps initiated by the Secretary-General to secure cooperation for the Mine-Clearance Programme in Central America pursuant to General Assembly

resolution AG/Res.1191 (XXII-0/92) require that contributions amounting to $3,200,000 be obtained for the Special Fund established by the resolution.

13. The continuity of this major undertaking in Central America is subject to financing and special contributions made available by the Governments in 1994. Needless to say, the different types of mines buried in Central America have become a destabilizing weapon, given their potential to erode the socio-economic infrastructure of rural areas and precipitate the uprooting of human settlements, with the consequent harmful effects on peace and order in the region.